

Goodbye

An oppressive quiet hung over the car throughout the beginning of the ride from King's Cross station.

"Let me out here" Harry commanded quietly, breaking the silence.

"What" Vernon blustered, "who are you to tell me what to do."

"I'll give you a simple choice" Harry gave his uncle an icy glare, "you will either let me out of the car right now, or I will inform my friends that you have been mistreating me, that you need a little visit to remind you to be courteous."

"Fine" Vernon growled in anger, "but don't expect me to wait around for you."

"I don't" Harry stepped onto the curb taking only his owl, "what I do expect is for you to take Dudley and Aunt Petunia out to eat and to take your time heading home."

"Who are you to order me around boy?" Vernon was begging to lose control over his temper.

"Here" Harry handed his uncle a fifty pound note, "enjoy yourselves."

"Where did you get this boy" Vernon asked in shock.

"Goodbye Uncle" Harry waved to his astonished relatives, "I don't believe that we will be seeing each other again."

The Dursleys didn't bother to respond, choosing to drive away without a backward glance.

Harry smiled sadly as he watched them go and then he opened the cage to let his owl free.

"Take this to Hermione girl" he attached a short note to the owl's leg, "and stay with her until I come to get you."

Hooting sadly, Hedwig gave his ear a last affectionate nip before taking off to deliver her master's message.

Harry watched until his beloved pet had faded from sight then he turned and began the short walk back to the wizarding world.

Taking a deep breath before he entered the Leaky Cauldron, Harry opened the door and quickly walked to the door that guarded the entrance to Diagon Alley.

He paused for a second in front of the brick entrance, fearing that cries of 'the-boy-who-lived' would erupt from behind, destroying his chance of having an enjoyable summer.

After several moments of silence, he tapped the correct sequence on the bricks and walked through the entrance to the wizarding world.

Rushing to Gringotts, he immediately went to the nearest open teller; "yes" the goblin looked down at him.

"I need a way to access my account while abroad" Harry answered quickly, "and I'll need to be able to get muggle money as well as Galleons."

"Key" the goblin asked reaching out to accept his vault key, "one moment please."

The goblin rummaged through a small chest on his desk for several minutes before pulling out a small pouch, "this pouch will draw coins directly from your account and if you tap it three times with your wand then it will change into a muggle wallet which will allow you to draw the appropriate muggle currency, will that be all?"

"I'll also need all of my transactions to be kept private" Harry hardened his features, "I do not want anyone finding out about any of my purchases."

"Of course not" the goblin seemed mildly offended, "we pride ourselves on our confidentiality."

“Good” Harry nodded in satisfaction, “otherwise I would have been forced to close my accounts and announce to the Daily Prophet that I no longer trust Gringotts to manage my fortunes.”

“I see” the goblin frowned, “rest assured that no one but yourself shall receive any accurate information concerning your account.”

“Thank you” Harry nodded politely, “so unless you have anything you want to talk about, then I’ve got to be going.”

“No Mr. Potter” the goblin’s face could have been carved from stone, “I don’t think we have anything else to discuss.”

Resisting the urge to smirk, Harry turned and slowly made his way towards the exit, for hopeful that his plan to have an enjoyable summer would work for the first time.

From Gringotts, Harry made his way to the ‘Ye Olde Travel Shoppe’ which was a small specialty shop for wizards and witches intending to spend time abroad.

Harry heard a faint ringing sound as he opened the door and he looked around for the shop keeper.

“What can I do for you?” an old man approached, “planning to go abroad are you?”

“Maybe” Harry shrugged, “I just want to drift around and see where I end up?”

“Ah” the old man smiled with understanding, “just graduated from one of the magic schools and now you want to go find yourself.”

“Something like that” Harry agreed with a sad smile.

“Then I have just the thing for you” the old man replied enthusiastically, “my patented ultimate backpackers’ kit, it has everything the young wanderer could ask for, a large multi compartment leather, frame pack, charmed to be light as a feather and to hold many times its normal capacity.”

“Really?” Harry began to take an interest, “what else?”

“It comes with a portable stove, cookware, a tent, sleeping bag and much more” the shop keep was really getting into it, “everything you need to travel anywhere from the tropics to the top of Mt Everest, this pack has it all.”

“Wow” Harry was mildly impressed, “what else would you recommend for someone who was planning to drift around?”

“A few more things sir” he shrugged, “the pack contains all of the essentials but there are several items that I can recommend to make life more pleasant in addition to the pack” the old man looked at Harry’s ragged appearance, “you’ll be wanting some new clothing, something to help you with other languages, and it may be a good idea to have a guide book along as well.”

“Ok,” Harry shrugged, “give me the best of whatever you recommend, just be quick about it, I want to be out of the country as soon as I can.”

“No problems kid,” The shop keep put several items on the table, “these glasses will adjust to any prescription, and in addition to many other things, allow you to read any language. This silver hoop goes in either ear and converts any language you hear into English, this ring goes on whichever hand you use to write with and allows you to write any language, and finally this small bar of silver goes through your tongue and magically contorts your mouth to allow you to speak any language, in time and with enough use they will eventually teach you the languages that you use.”

“Wow,” Harry nodded impressed by the items, “what else?”

“This book,” the man indicated a book entitled ‘Everything you will Ever Need to Know while Traveling around the World,’ “is full of useful information and . . . I would recommend that you read the warnings in the front about underage magic before you do anything else, and this set of clothing will magically alter its self to whatever is needed for whatever climate you are in, it has charms to be self-cleaning and self-repairing and it can change colors and stiles with a thought.”

“There is one more thing that I would like to get,” Harry bit his lower lip, “I was wondering if you had an item that would allow me to . . . blend in better?”

“Want to immerse yourself in the culture huh?” The storeowner nodded his head, “got just the thing, this bracelet creates a powerful SEP field around you and it will help you remained unnoticed unless you commit an aggressive or incredibly strange act.”

“Thanks,” Harry gave a relived smile, “do you know where I could arrange for a portkey to get me to the continent?”

“Pick up you kit and I’ll have one ready for you in a jiffy”

“Thanks”

“Here you go lad,” the man handed Harry a small stone.

“Thanks, how much do I owe you?”

“Don’t worry about it Harry,” the man smiled at Harry’s shocked look, “conceder it a thanks for looking out for us and sorry about believing the worst of you, it’s untraceable and it will take you to Holland right about . . .” Harry disappeared, “now, I hope you find what you are looking for lad.”

Pandemonium would best describe the scene outside number 4 Privet Drive when the Dursleys arrived without Harry.

Within minutes, Albus Dumbledore had arrived along with several members of his Order to begin their investigation.

“The Dursleys say that he had them drop him off in London Professor,” one of the Order members reported to the Headmaster, “says that he didn’t want to stay with them and decided to just leave.”

“I found something in their car that belonged to Harry,” Remus Lupin ran up brandishing a small paper pamphlet, “it has Harry’s scent all over it.”

“Thank you Remus,” the Headmaster accepted the small pamphlet, “I believe it’s time I went and had a chat with Harry’s friends about his whereabouts.”

The Headmaster appeared before a small upper-class suburban home and rang the doorbell once, “Hello?” A good looking woman answered the door, “what can I help you with?”

“Greetings,” Dumbledore smiled, “I’m the Headmaster at Hermione’s school and I was wondering if I could speak with her.”

“Of course,” the woman nodded, “won’t you come in?”

“Delighted to”

“Professor Dumbledore,” a bushy headed young woman called from atop a stair case, “I’m glad that you got my letter, but I didn’t expect to see you this soon.”

“I’m afraid that I didn’t get any letter Ms. Granger,” Dumbledore smiled at her kindly, “what was the problem?”

“I got a strange letter from Harry that I thought you should know about,” the intelligent young witch looked worried, “and I was hoping that you would check to see if he was doing ok.”

“I’m afraid that I have some bad news,” Dumbledore took a deep breath, “Harry had his uncle drop him off somewhere in London, and he has been missing for several hours.”

“You don’t think he got captured do you?”

“Rest assured that I’ve had no information that would lead me to that conclusion,” the Headmaster reached into his robes and pulled out the worn pamphlet that had been found by Remus Lupin, “I’m afraid the only clue we have is this brochure that we found in his relatives’ car.”

“May I see that Professor?” Hermione took the pamphlet gently, “this looks like a standard handout from one of the charity organizations that were in the Muggle Portion of King’s Cross.”

“Why do you think that Harry kept it?”

“Well, this particular charity tries to help dieing children and . . . oh no.” The pretty young witch paled, “Harry thinks he’s going to die.”

“What do you mean by that Ms. Granger?” The Headmaster demanded, “What leads you to that conclusion?”

“This belongs to the ‘Make A Wish Foundation’ they do things to bring happiness to terminally ill children,” Hermione brandished the pamphlet, “Harry must have learned something that makes him think that he doesn’t have much time left to live.”

“I see,” the Headmaster’s shoulders dropped, “is that why he didn’t return to Privet Drive?”

“He wants to make the most of the time he has left,” Hermione was holding back tears, “not to spend it with people he hates.”

“Thank you, you’ve been most helpful,” the Headmaster gave Hermione a sad smile and disappeared with a faint pop.

After Dumbledore’s disappearance, Hermione ran up to her room and reread the short note that had been sent along with Hedwig, clutching it to her chest she let the tears fall and hoped for the safe return of her best friend.

Hermione,

Please look over Hedwig; I want to live before I die.

Harry

AN: I included the shopping trip because I like writing about the items that one can find, sure I could have done something different but at least I confined myself to one store. Harry sent Hedwig to Hermione for several reasons; one of them is that she does not have access to an owl during the holidays. Got the idea for this from the ‘make a wish’ foundation, Harry is convinced that he is going to die so he wants to do the things he always wanted to do before he goes. The

scene with the goblin was because of all the fics that have Dumbledore watching Harry's funding, he may or may not be in this fic, don't think that it will be important to the storyline but I thought that I may as well throw it in. Hermione figured it out because she is A. Muggle Born and B. Very Intelligent, besides I like the character and I wanted to give her a bit of screen time. For any who don't know, the 'Make a Wish Foundation' try to give dieing children their fondest desire before they die, things like meeting pro athletes and going to Disney Land.

The Adventure Begins

Harry's hand immediately went to his wand after the tug of the portkey disappeared,

"Welcome to Amsterdam kid," a man in a strange uniform greeted him with a smile.

Slowly taking his hand off of his wand, Harry looked over to see a blond man in an odd uniform, "hello."

"Papers?" The man held out his hand expectantly.

"Um, just a moment," Harry stalled as he tried to figure out what to do, "I know I have them here somewhere."

"Take your time," the man's demeanor became decidedly colder as he began to regard Harry with suspicion.

"One second," Harry reached into his new pack, trying to think of some way to keep his vacation from ending before it began, within seconds, his fingers brushed up against a small leather booklet. Pulling it out, Harry looked at it dumbly, trying to figure out what it was.

"Thank you Sir," the man carefully took the small booklet out of Harry's hands and began examining it, "oh, I'm sorry Mr. Black, I didn't realize that you were stalling out of embarrassment and not because of some other purpose."

"Yes, well I . . ." Harry replied eloquently.

"No need to say a thing," the man stamped several pages in the small book, "I understand what it's like to have an odd name and none need know anything but your last name."

"Thanks," Harry took his Passport back and resisted the urge to ask, "You wouldn't happen to know a good place to stay the night would you?"

“Outside and to the left about two blocks down, you can’t miss it.”

“Thanks,” Harry nodded to the man, “and have a good day.”

“You as well Mr. Black,” the Customs Agent gave him one last grin before waving him through the gates.

The second that he was out of the Customs Agent’s sight, Harry pulled out the small leather covered booklet that had been identified as his Passport and opened it to see what had drawn the man’s attention, it took several seconds of examination before he found it under the name section.

Apparently he was named ‘Padamus Da Grim Nomed Black,’ it was also apparent that the salesman back in Diagon Alley knew entirely too much, and had a rather ‘odd’ sense of humor.

It only took Harry about five minutes to find the hotel and get himself a room, walking over to his bed he prepared to take a short nap before going out to explore the world.

Then he remembered the salesman’s advise to read the first page of the book, pulling it out, he flipped to the warning and began to read.

A warning to parents with school aged children:

It is a little known fact that the tracking charms placed by the various governments of the wizarding world on the wands of underage children are only effective in their country of origin. This means that if the tracking charm was cast in England then your child could perform underage magic in any country besides England without fear of being caught. This problem is further exasperated by the Ignotus charm which can be used to remove tracking charms from a tracked wand. This problem is not insurmountable and so long as your child does not learn and perform the Dolus charm, then your child’s wand can be checked regularly by any number of detection spells to insure that they have not removed the tracking charms if however your child does perform the Dolus charm on their wand after performing the Ignotus charm, then there is no known way that their wand can be accurately checked for the absence of the Ministry mandated tracking

charms because of the fact that the Dolus charm will give out a false positive and prevent the application of any new tracking charms.

For information purposes only, the proper wand movements and incantations for both the Ignotus and Dolus charms are provided below. You may also note that at the beginning of each country section a list of restricted and illegal spells is provided along with a list of useful spells, also for information purposes only.

Harry blinked and a smirk appeared on his face as he realized why the shopkeeper had insisted that he read the warning in the beginning of the book before he did anything else, not a day into his summer holiday and things were already beginning to look up.

Placing his book back into his pack, Harry stretched out on his bed for a few hours of sleep. After all, even a socially deprived kid who was raised in a cupboard knows that it's best to explore Amsterdam at night.

In the Red-Light District, Harry found himself overwhelmed by the sights, the smells, the lights, and the people.

Peeking into one of the many windows, Harry learned more about human anatomy than had been taught in the short course he had received in grade school and his twenty minute stroll had taught him more about the world than he had in all of his previous years combined.

Face red and head spinning with new experiences; Harry beat a hasty retreat to the relative safety of hotel room, deciding that maybe it would be best to explore during the day, allowing himself the luxury of easing into the night life.

Awaking early the next morning, Harry dressed himself and walked down to the hotel's lobby.

"Good morning," he nodded to a pair of Swedish backpackers.

"Hello," the two Swedish girls grinned at the confused look on his face, "first time in Amsterdam?"

“Yes it is, everything is just so . . .”

“Yes it can be a bit overwhelming can’t it?” Hot Swedish girl number two agreed, “we’ve been here several times and we still find it a bit overwhelming at times.”

“If you’ve been here several times, then what do you suggest I do?” Harry asked the buxom twosome.

“Why don’t you go down to one of the coffee shops and get some brownies,” Hot Swedish girl number one suggested with a wink.

“Thanks,” Harry smiled brightly, “I could something sweet right now.”

Waving goodbye to his two new friends, Harry walked across the street to one of Amsterdam’s infamous coffee shops.

“Good morning,” the Barista greeted him, “what can I get for you today?”

“Some girls recommended that I try some of your brownies.”

“Alright,” the man nodded cheerfully, “anything to drink?”

“Could I get a cup of tea with milk,” at the man’s nod, Harry continued. “Add the tea to the milk and don’t stir.”

“Just take a seat and I’ll have it right out.”

Nodding in understanding, Harry found himself a seat in one of the corner tables.

After a short amount of time, the barista came out with a tray containing a large mug of tea and a plate full of brownies.

“Enjoy,” the man gave Harry a knowing smile before returning to his place behind the counter.

Taking his first tentative bite of the baked goods, Harry was surprised at how good it tasted, chocolaty with a hint of something that he couldn’t identify.

Harry felt a strange sort of calm fall over his body as he sipped his tea; for the first time that he could remember he felt relaxed, he felt like a normal person, he felt like none of his problems mattered anymore.

After several hours, and several cups of tea, Harry rose to his feet and walked out of the coffee shop intent on finding some lunch at the restaurant on the other side of the avenue.

Moments after Harry found his table the peace of the day was shattered by the sounds of a four incoming Apparations.

Figuring that the Order had found him and that his vacation had come to an end, Harry looked out the large picture window and was shocked to see the street filled not with Order members, but with a four figures in black robes and white masks.

Harry was out of his seat in a flash and halfway to the kitchen before most of the other patrons of the café had time to blink.

“Do you have any cooking oil?” Harry grabbed the confused cook by the front of his shirt.

“Right over there,” the cook eyed the obviously deranged man with no small amount of nervousness, “you’ll find all the oil that you could ask for.”

Grabbing two large bottles, Harry made his way back to the front of the café and towards the newly arrived group of dark wizards.

“We know you’re here Potter,” one of the masked figures called, “come out and none of these muggles have to get hurt.”

Frowning in annoyance, Harry threw the two bottles towards the group and hit them with a shattering charm.

“There he is, get him,” the apparent leader of the Death Munchers called after he noticed the source of the incoming spell.

Several of the Death Eaters made to follow their commander's instructions, only to slip in the puddle of oil that Harry had dumped into the street.

Harry further thinned their numbers with several Reductor Curses and within seconds there was not a Death Eater standing.

And after summoning their wands, he approached the fallen figures cautiously, reacting to any movement with several well placed stunners.

Walking up to the leader of the detachment Harry removed the man's mask and cloak.

"Enervate," Harry gave a nasty smile to the leader of the detachment, "what exactly was your purpose here?"

"I'm not saying a thing," the Death Eater growled defiantly, "I know my rights and you can't force me to do a thing."

"That's not strictly true," Harry smirked, "you see, I am not an employee of any magical government."

"So?"

"So until a representative of the Dutch Ministry arrives, I get to play with you all I want."

"Y-you wouldn't do that," the Death Eater bit back nervously; "you're one of the good guys."

"No," Harry disagreed, "I'm just a guy on vacation, now do you want to see how many bones I can break before I have to turn you over to Law Enforcement or do you want to talk."

"We were here to capture Harry Potter"

"How did you find him?"

"One of the Dark Lord's followers at Hogwarts placed a tracking charm on the boy in an attempt to find out where he lives over the

summer, I guess that muggle loving Headmaster of his didn't bother to check his golden boy."

"Stupefy," Harry looked down at the Death Eater in disgust, it appeared that Tom had been recruiting; it also appeared that he hadn't managed to get any competent new followers.

"Staatstovenaars stay where you are," Several wizards in official looking robes approached wearily, "slowly place your wand on the ground and then put your hands up."

"I would rather not put my wand on the ground," Harry was careful not to make any sudden movements, "one of these morons might be conscious and if so, then I would rather not give him my wand."

"Then slowly hold your wand by the tip and hold it above your head," an intimidating looking witch commanded, "then walk towards me."

"Alright," Harry agreed, "I don't suppose that you'd believe me if I were to tell you that I didn't have anything to do with this?"

Harry looked around hopefully for a few moments and then let out a sigh, "didn't think so."

"I am going to take your wand from you and then I am going to get your statement," the witch handed his wand off to one of his comrades, "do not move."

"Still as a statue," Harry had to resist the urge to frown.

The witch relaxed quite a bit after he had taken Harry's wand, "now sir, if I could take your statement?"

"Sure," Harry nodded then added hopefully, "I don't suppose that you could take my statement while I got something to eat?"

"So long as you aren't with them," the man motioned towards the death eaters, "then you can give your statement standing on your head Mr.?"

“Black,” Harry gave his most charming smile, “may I lower my arms they’re starting to cramp.”

“You may,” the woman nodded, “I am Staatstovenaar Annie Van Der Mijer, could you tell me what happened here?”

“Well, I was just sitting down for lunch when they appeared.” Harry motioned towards the fallen Death Munchers, “I ran to the kitchen and got some oil, I used that and a few well placed curses to defeat the group.”

“Did you have any assistance?” Staatstovenaar Van Der Mijer asked quickly.

“No,” Harry shook his head and upon seeing her shocked look clarified, “what we have here is the absolute worst that Voldemort has in his service, and I had surprise and luck on my side.”

“I see,” the woman nodded, “do you have anything else to add?”

“The leader said something about using a tracking charm to hunt someone.” Harry grimaced, “and being the suspicious sort that I am, I was wondering if you would be willing to check me for such a charm and if necessary remove it?”

“Of course,” the woman performed several complex wand movements, “you were correct, you did have such a spell but I do not believe that it was placed by a Death Eater.”

“Why not?”

“It was rather amateurishly done; I’d say that whoever placed it couldn’t be out of school.”

“Thank you,” Harry gave a relieved grin, “probably just a prank then, but one can never be too careful.”

“I agree,” the Staatstovenaar nodded, “find a seat, and if the other witnesses collaborate your story then your wand will be returned and you will be free to go.”

“Thank you,” Harry nodded politely, “may I ask you one question?”

“You may”

“Are these attacks common in Holland?”

“No,” the woman paused to think, “I believe that this is only the second in the last twenty years, normally they confine their activities to the UK.”

“Thank you,” Harry smiled, “with luck, it will be another twenty years before you have to deal with another.”

“I’d rather we never have to deal with another,” the woman shrugged, “if you will just wait here for a moment, I’d just like converse with my colleagues for a moment before we continue.”

“Sure thing,” Harry took a seat on the curb.

The woman favored Harry with one last smile then she walked out of earshot to another group of Staatstovenaars, “Well?”

“The witnesses all agree that a group of men in black robes appeared and began yelling something about something in English,” The man checked his notes. “The man Black came out of the café and attacked, he then walked up to the fallen Death Eaters and hit them with a red light, and then we arrived. All told it sounds like the fight was over in less then two minutes.”

“Alright,” the woman blinked in surprise, “what else?”

One of the other Staatstovenaar pulled out his note book, “each of the suspects was hit by multiple Reductor Curses and stunners, looks like they were down before they even had time to fight back,” he glanced at Harry, “whoever this guy is, he doesn’t like to play around.”

Staatstovenaar Van Der Mijer took out her own notebook, “we have a male of unknown nationality and age that by his own account defeated four Death Eaters before they had a chance to cast a single spell, though in his professional option was that they were new

recruits. He speaks perfect Dutch with a Haarlem accent, and.” The woman paused, “and he has an unknown magical effect that makes it difficult for me to give a description. Any ideas on who we’re dealing with here?”

“Whoever he is, he’s good,” one of the men bit his lower lip, “I know most of the Staatstovenaars in Holland, so maybe an experienced Staatstovenaar from another country?”

“I disagree,” one of the others shook his head, “I can count on one hand the people who are good enough to do something like this, and most of them are missing so many body parts that they couldn’t be him even under heavy disguise.”

“And the ones that aren’t?” Van Der Mijer asked quietly.

“Had their minds shattered by over exposure to the Cruciatus Curse,” the Staatstovenaar finished sadly, “whoever he is, wherever he came from, I can’t say.”

“I see,” Van Der Mijer nodded, “I’ll go talk to him and get more of a statement, maybe he’ll let something slip.”

“I wouldn’t count on it,” the man paused, “men like him don’t make mistakes.”

“Then wish me luck,” she said over her shoulder as she began walking towards the enigmatic Mr. Black.

“Well?” Harry smiled up at her.

“Your story checks out,” she nodded, “if you want, we can go to a restaurant where you can get something to eat and I can get a more detailed statement.”

“Fine,” Harry nodded, “is there anywhere around here that you would suggest we go?”

“Would you prefer wizard or non?”

“Either is fine,” Harry grinned, “so long as it tastes good and there’s a lot of it.”

“Then I would suggest we go over to the magical section of Kalverstraat, they’ve got a restaurant that claims they will serve anything the customer can think of.”

“Sounds fine, is it far from here?”

“Just around the corner”

“Then let’s go,” Harry replied, eager to finally get his lunch.

Harry followed the Dutch Law Enforcement Officer through a series of twists and turns until they came to a small café in the mouth of a street that branched off the main, “here we are.”

“Great,” Harry looked at the café with approval, “let’s find a table.”

“Please follow me,” the waiter announced his presence, “will you be requiring a menu?”

“No thank you,” Harry waved the man off, “I’ll be ready to order in a few minutes, to start with though could you bring me something to drink?”

“Right away Sir”

“I’m afraid that I don’t know much about Dutch Food,” Harry grinned. “What would you suggest I order?”

“I’ve always liked the Limburgs Zuurvlees,” the woman responded after a moment of contemplation.

“Thank you, and feel free to order something for yourself.”

“Thank you”

After a short wait, the waiter had taken their orders and the curious Staatstovenaar pulled out her note book, eager to get her questions answered.

“So, Mr. Black,” she took a moment to collect her thoughts, “what made you think that those Death Eaters were new recruits?”

“Experience,” Harry took a sip of his drink, “I’ve faced several members of the inner circle and each one of them would have been quicker to throw curses,” Harry paused for a moment. “Voldemort has very few followers that are anything more than low grade thugs, even his inner circle attempts to substitute skill for sadism, the four I faced didn’t even measure up to that low standard.”

“I see,” the woman hid her surprise, “do you think that we’ll see more of them?”

“I don’t know,” Harry took a sip from his drink, “my guess would be that they were not working on an official mission, so there is a good chance that Volde won’t bother to break them out of prison.”

“Why do you think that?”

“It sounded as if they were hunting someone, and in an official hunting party there would be a high ranking Death Muncher along to supervise, for an important target it would be a member of the inner circle,” Harry stopped when the waiter returned with the food and waited until the man was out of earshot. “The leader of this group was a low level flunky; my guess was that they were on an operation of their own in hopes of eliminating the target on their own in some misguided attempt to curry favor with their master.”

“I see,” definitely a professional, the woman thought to herself. “I noticed that you started out with some rather . . . lethal spells and only switched to stunners after the Death Eaters were down?”

“Yes I did,” Harry agreed, “another lesson I learned the hard way is that a stunner is rather easy to counter, but broken bones keep your opponent down.”

“I’ll keep that in mind, just who are you Mr. Black?”

“I’m just a guy on a vacation to try to find something he’s lost.”

“And what’s that?”

“Life,” Harry replied sadly.

AN: I just wanted to use the word ‘buxom.’ Some of you may be wondering why Harry got some brownies at a coffee shop. If you do not know; it is because brownies are tasty and why shouldn’t he eat them. If you do know; what trip to Amsterdam is complete without a visit to a coffee shop? Barista what a person who works at a coffee shop is called, my ex-roommate use to be one which is the only reason that I know that.

Thanks go to Finbar for providing me with a lot of suggestions and information on back packing around Europe. And Roos AKA Aria-Chan who gave me a lot of info on Holland.

Tip Toe through the Tulips

“Oh,” Van Der Mijer looked at him sympathetically, “saw too much and now you want to get away from it all?”

“I’ve never had a vacation,” Harry seemed to stare at nothing, “all my life I’ve never had a chance to relax; I just want a chance to do the things I never had a chance to do, I think I deserve that much.”

“I agree Mr. Black,” she watched him jump, “and I hope that the remainder of your vacation is a bit quieter then today has been.”

“Thank you,” Harry allowed his eyes to refocus, “let’s go back to the incident, do you have any more questions for me?”

“A few,” the woman checked her notebook, “speaking as one professional to another, how would you suggest we deal with any future Death Eater activity in Holland?”

“I would suggest that you look very closely at the methods you have for keeping your prisons secure,” Harry took a sip from his drink. “For example, I believe that one of the prime reasons for mass escape from the British Ministry’s prison on Azkaban Island was the fact that they gave too much trust to the Dementors.”

"I see," Staatstovenaar Van Der Mijer made several notes, "any dueling advice?"

"What many Law Enforcement Professionals seem to forget is that they are much better trained than most Death Eaters, the problem is that the Death Munchers and Moldy shorts have such fearsome reputations that people forget just how incompetent they are." Harry gave a sad smile, "but never forget that they are dangerous, and never let down your guard because you think that they're helpless, a very good friend of mine almost died because she let her guard down around a 'helpless' Death Eater."

"Thank you, anything else that you'd be willing to share?"

"One more thing," Harry put down his fork and fixed the woman with an intense look, "always take the fight seriously, never for a moment let your guard slip. I . . . I lost a very good friend because he forgot that."

"Thanks for sharing that," she smiled at the man across the table, "I'll be sure to keep those lessons in mind."

"Good," Harry nodded sadly, "nothing would please me more than the thought that someone might learn something from my experiences. It allows me to pretend that some good came with the bad."

Staatstovenaar Van Der Mijer paused for a moment unsure of how to reply to such a statement. "What are your plans for the remainder of your vacation Mr. Black?"

"Well," Harry forced himself to smile. "I was planning on visiting some of the museums around here and maybe visiting some of Holland's famous Tulip fields, after that I'll drift somewhere else."

"Would you mind leaving contact information?" The Staatstovenaar asked quickly, "I believe that the head of Magical Law Enforcement would like to meet with you in the future."

"Alright," Harry wrote his hotel and room number on a napkin, "Here is where I'll be staying while I'm in Holland, I have no idea where I'll be after that."

“Thank you, I’m sure that will be fine,” she stood. “Please allow me to pay your bill; it’s the least my department can do for the assistance that you provided us today.”

“Thank you,” Harry stood, “if you need to speak with me again today, I’ll be visiting museums for the remainder of the day and I’ll be back in my hotel room around seven or eight o’clock tonight.”

“Thank you for your time Mr. Black,” the Staatstovenaar held out her hand, “we will be in touch with you in the near future.”

“Anytime Staatstovenaar Van Der Mijer,” Harry took her hand, “I am always happy to help in anyway that I can.”

Harry and Van Der Mijer said their goodbyes and Harry was off on his next adventure, to build himself a larger cache of memories to cherish.

It was a short trip to Rembrandt House Museum on Jodenbreestraat and Harry’s excitement and grew with every step.

While he didn’t like to admit it, Harry had always had a love of art; it had seemed to him the only profession that would benefit from the amount of trauma that he had experienced in his young life.

Art had always been one of the few joys that Harry had in his life and when he was younger and locked in his cupboard, he use to calm himself by closing his eyes and imagining the wonder that artists could create using only their imaginations and a bit of paint.

Harry’s heart seemed to want to burst from his chest as he entered the house that had once belonged to one of the greatest artists the world has seen.

Harry forced himself to hurry as he walked through the museum and throughout his visit, Harry marveled at the sheer diversity of the items he found.

Harry visited over a dozen museums that day and he saw hundreds of works from Rembrandt to Van Gough, and he felt a profound sense of regret that in all likelihood his conflict with Voldemort would prevent a longer visit in the future.

Walking through the front doors of his hotel, Harry mentally compared the paintings at Hogwarts with the masterpieces that he had seen earlier that day, Harry came to a realization, “amateurs,” he muttered to himself. In comparison to what he had been privileged to see in Amsterdams’ museums, many of the works so celebrated in the Wizarding world were nothing more than crude drawings with a bit of magic.

The two Staatstovenaar that had spent the day discreetly following the enigmatic Mr. Black nearly had heart attacks when their long range microphones picked up the odd wizard’s comment.

Sharing a look of surprise mingled with respect, the two Law Enforcement Officers Apparated to their offices to give their reports.

Upon their appearance at the office, they were greeted by a large number of curious people and one supervisor who was more than a little eager to learn more about the mysterious Mr. Black.

“Peters, Jansen, give me a quick report on how the surveillance on Mr. Black went.”

“What do you want to know first Wieland?” Staatstovenaar Mark Peters asked slowly.

“How did he spend his day?”

“Mr. Black spent the day visiting several art museums around the city,” Staatstovenaar Peters replied quickly.

“Did Mr. Black notice that he was being followed?”

“We had no indication that he knew that he was being followed until the end of the day,” The Staatstovenaar paused as he tried to collect his thoughts.

“What happened Mark?” The older officer prompted using his colleague’s first name.

“At the end of the day, Mr. Black shook his head, smirked, and muttered the word ‘amateurs’ under his breath,” the man licked his

lips. "I'm not sure if we were meant to hear it but based on our speculation of Mr. Black's past and capabilities, we believe that he was aware of the fact that he was under surveillance."

"Was that the only indication you received?"

"The only one we're sure of," Jansen entered the conversation. "But several times during the day looked in the shop windows, at the time we believed that he was looking at the items on display but now I'm not so sure . . ."

"What are you thinking?" Wieland prompted.

"I think that he may have been watching us in the reflections on the windows, and I also think that we should examine the possibility that he was aware of our presence the entire time."

"Don't worry about it," Staatstovenaar Wieland rubbed his eyes. "I know that there is no way that a normal suspect would have noticed either of you in a normal surveillance operation, we knew that he was good and now we have an idea of just how good."

"Still, it bothers me that he was able to spot us and that we never even noticed that he was watching us," Jansen bit his lower lip.

"There is no shame in being beaten by the best," Wieland consoled his two officers, "and there's no shame in being spotted by someone as good as this Black fellow."

Harry was in a good mood as he awoke early the next morning, his visits to the art museum providing his subconscious with material to give him dreams that were far better than his usual nightmares.

Dressing quickly, Harry left the hotel and walked through the maze of streets that guarded the magical section of Kalverstraat.

Walking down the street, Harry's senses were assaulted by a series of strange smells and odd sights.

Giving up his plan of finding anything without directions, he walked into the nearest shop intent on finding someone willing to give him instruction on how to navigate this bustling section of Magical Holland.

“Can I help you?” one of the shop attendants asked when she noticed Harry walk in.

“Yes,” Harry nodded gratefully, “I was hoping you could tell me where I could find some transportation to the tulip fields in the north of the country and back?”

“Two doors up, shop by the name of ‘Floral Tours’ tell the man behind the counter what you want and he’ll set you up with a tour or Porkey depending on what you require,” the woman smiled. “While you’re here, could I interest you in a camera? Might be nice to have something to take a few pictures with if you plan to go sight seeing.”

“Sure,” Harry nodded reasoning that it would be polite to buy something after all the help that he had received; besides, it wasn’t like he couldn’t afford it. “What do you recommend I should get?”

“That would all depend on what you plan to do with it, we have models ranging from ten Guldens on up.” She smiled sweetly, “why don’t you describe what your needs are and I’ll tell you what cameras would meet them or if you prefer you could tell me what amount you would like to spend and I’ll show you what falls within your price range.”

“Thank you,” Harry concentrated for a bit. “I guess that I need a camera that is very durable, I tend to get into trouble and I would hate to have to keep replacing my camera.”

“Anything else?”

“Reliable,” Harry nodded, “and small, I don’t want something that will take up a lot of space, it would be nice if it would develop its own film or not need film also.”

“I think I have just the camera for you,” the woman smiled. “But I am afraid that it’s a bit expensive,” she added with a frown.

“Tell me about it.”

“Let me show it to you while I tell you some of its features,” she pulled one of the cameras off the shelf, “as you can see, it’s small, only three by four inches and it is durable able to function in any environment from the top of a mountain to the bottom of the sea.”

“Wow,” Harry was impressed, “what else?”

“It has an internal transfiguration feature that turns any raw material entered into the feeding compartment into useable film and another feature that develops the film into pictures which it prints through this slot in the side.”

“What about reliability?”

“It has a self repair feature to take care of physical damage and a three hundred year warranty to take care of any magical problems.”

“I’ll take it,” Harry pulled out his wallet and began removing currency, “thank you.”

“My pleasure sir,” the sales girl smiled at him one last time, “enjoy your trip and I hope that your camera serves you well.”

“I will,” Harry nodded as he walked out the door.

It only took him a few minutes to find the shop that the girl in the other store had mentioned, and when he stepped inside he was amazed at the number and quality of the floral arrangements on display.

“Hello?” He called into the seemingly empty store, “is there anyone here?”

“Yes?” A confused looking man popped out from behind the counter, “what can I do for you?”

“I was hoping to visit the tulip fields,” Harry answered, “and I was told that you could help me with transportation.”

“Yes of course,” the odd man nodded, “did you need a tour guide?”

“No, I just wanted to spend a few hours looking at them on my own and I was hoping to get a Portkey to get me there and one to take me back.”

“One moment,” the man disappeared behind the counter again, “here we are.” He said appearing with two odd looking tulip shaped figurines, “just hold the green one and say ‘Kalverstraat’ when you wish to return and hold the red one and say ‘Tulip’ when you wish to leave.”

“Thank you,” Harry paid the man and stepped outside the shop, “Tulip.”

Harry felt the tell tale pull on his navel and nearly stumbled as he arrived on a hill with a breathtaking view of several tulip fields.

Taking several pictures of the sight, Harry supposed that other people would think it odd that a boy of his age would spend his time visiting museums and taking pictures of flowers but it was his belief that after seeing so much ugliness in his life, he was entitled to a bit of beauty.

Besides, it wasn't like he was going to be able to hold off on such things until he was older like the others of his generation, not with his destiny of facing the Dark Lord anyway.

He spent an indeterminate amount of time just standing on the hill staring at the loveliness before him before he decided to leave his position and get a closer look at the flowers.

Harry spent several minutes walking beside the fields until a flicker of movement drew his attention, after a moment of close examination he relaxed when he found the source of the movement; an odd sort of creature frolicking inside one of the Tulips.

Smiling in amusement at the strange creature's antics, he took several pictures of it with his new camera.

Taking one last look around and sighing with regret he activated his second Portkey and returned to Amsterdam.

“Good evening Mr. Black,” two men holding badges greeted Harry on his return.

“Hello,” Harry replied cautiously, “what can I do for you gentlemen tonight?”

“The head of Magical Law Enforcement has requested that you meet with her,” one of the men answered.

“When?”

“Now if possible,” the man quickly replied, “but if that is inconvenient to you then I suppose that we could reschedule.”

“Now would be fine,” Harry nodded, “let’s go.”

One of the two men nodded and held out his badge, “my badge has been spelled as a Portkey to the Department; so if you would just touch it then we can be going.”

“Alright,” Harry activated the Portkey by putting his hand on the badge.

“Welcome Mr. Black,” a formidable woman wearing what Harry recognized to be a Staatstovenaar uniform greeted him on his arrival. “I am Hooft Van De Staatstovenaar, Sanne Vermeer and I am pleased that you accepted my invitation.”

“It seemed like the polite thing to do,” Harry nodded. “What was it you wanted to speak with me about?”

“I have looked over the reports of your fight with the Death Eaters and I would like to take the opportunity to thank you on behalf of my country for your intervention.” The woman smiled, “and the lives that you undoubtedly saved by neutralizing the Death Eaters before they had a chance to harm any innocents.”

“No thanks are necessary,” Harry tried to wave it off. “I just did what anybody would have done if they had the ability.”

"I disagree, and more importantly the Minister disagrees," Vermeer's voice took on a firmer tone. "So in recognition of the great service that you have given to our country and the lives that you have saved, it is my great pleasure to induct you into the Orde Van De Leeuw.

"Thank you," Harry was stunned, "I've never, I, Thank you."

"I understand," Vermeer smiled at him as she presented him with the medal, "men like you don't do it for the thanks."

"I never expected this when I confronted those Death Eaters," Harry motioned to the medal, "I just thought that they were after me and that it would be better to attack then to run away."

"But even had you known that they were not after you, would you have run or would you have leapt to the defense of innocent lives?" The chief of Magical Law Enforcement questioned gently.

"I would have protected them, but like I said that was nothing special," Harry argued. "Anyone would have done the same."

"I see that I'm not going to persuade you otherwise," Vermeer laughed, "so I'll change the subject, what are your plans now?"

"I was thinking about going to Paris," Harry shrugged, "always wanted to see the Eiffel Tower, after that I guess I'll go where the wind takes me."

"Excellent, thank you for sharing your travel plans with me." The Hooft Van De Staatstovenaar nodded in satisfaction, "now if you will excuse me I have a meeting to go to and I'm sure that you would like to return to your hotel."

"Then good night Hooft Van De Staatstovenaar Sanne Vermeer," Harry gave a sad smile, "may your dreams be better then mine."

"Good night Mr. Black," the women replied sadly, "and thank you once again for the lives that you saved."

AN: Forgot to mention in the last chapter, 'Staatstovenaars' is the Plural of 'Staatstovenaar' which is Dutch for 'State Wizard' figured that I would give different names for Magical Law Enforcement in different countries. I should also make it clear that this takes place after book 5. Oh, and in any part of this story that has some minor detail wrong (i.e. flowers growing in the wrong season) it's because of magic and not because I didn't do my research. Hooft Van De Staatstovenaar translates roughly to Chief of Aurors or Head of Magical Law Enforcement.

W'rknacnter (ProBro 1442 – I agree, but I still admire the idea behind the foundation despite the fact that I have issues with some of their actions.

Chaos-Empersonified – Oops, forgot to say. It means State Wizard in Dutch.

Von – He got some new clothing in the first chapter, got to remember to have Harry read the instruction manual for his bracelet.

Fangalla Marie – Not the whip, I'll try to update as much as possible.

P.L.S – Yes

Welcome to the City of Lights

Harry returned to his hotel room later that night, pulling out his new camera he hit the button to develop his pictures and spent several minutes flipping through them.

He was pleased to see that he had gotten several good shots of the odd little creature that he had seen, and he was a bit disappointed that several of his photos had not turned out quite as well as he might have hoped.

Placing one of them into an envelope, he addressed it to the Quibbler and chuckled as he imagined Luna's reaction to some of the odd positions the little creature would take.

Discarding the one photo that appeared to be nothing but an empty patch of grass, he carefully packed the rest of them and went to sleep.

Harry got up early the next morning and shouldered his pack, approaching the front desk he smiled at the staff.

"Good morning Mr. Black, did you sleep well?" The polite young man behind the counter asked.

"Yes I did, thank you," Harry nodded back; "I've decided that it's time I moved on."

"I see, checking out then?" The worker pulled out a form, "sign here please."

Harry signed the form and paid his bill, "I was wondering if you could do one favor for me?"

"Of course, what can I do for you?"

"I was wondering if you would be willing to have this letter posted to England?" Harry slid the envelope across the desk.

"Of course," the man took the letter, "I shall have it sent out immediately."

“Thank you,” Harry gave one last sad smile, “and have a good day.”

“You as well Mr. Black, and do not hesitate to call on us if you find yourself without a place to stay in your future visits to our lovely city.”

“I won’t,” Harry smiled at the thought of living long enough to make a return trip, “good bye.”

Harry stepped out the door and within a few minutes had arrived at the train station, walking up to the window; he bought a ticket to Paris and hurried to his waiting train.

While he waited for the train to leave, Harry found himself lost in thought. He wished that he could have spent more time in Holland, Harry realized that with the fact that he was being actively hunted by at least two powers that it would not be prudent to stay in one place for too long.

So it was with a heavy heart, Harry boarded his train and left the Low Countries behind.

As Harry’s train left the station, two Staatstovenaars were busy searching his vacant hotel room to see what if any clues the mysterious Mr. Black had left behind.

“What have you got there Bisseling?” One of the Staatstovenaars asked his colleague.

“I’m not sure Dubbeldam,” the man squinted at the photo that he had found in the waste basket, “looks like a photo of an empty patch of grass.”

“Hand that over,” Staatstovenaar Dubbeldam held out his hand, “let me look at it a bit.”

“What do you think of it?” Bisseling asked after he had handed the photo over, “why would Mr. Black have left that for us?”

“I’m not . . .” the Staatstovenaar’s eyes widened in surprise and he spoke in a tone of awed disbelief, “I don’t believe it.”

“What?”

“I was assigned to watch over Mr. Black yesterday, command felt that there was a very large chance that he might be attacked by Death Eaters and they wanted to provide a bit of discrete protection.” He took a breath, “Mr. Black spotted the tail they had on him on the previous day so I was given an Invisibility cloak.”

“So?”

“So what I am holding is a picture of the indentations on the grass caused by my standing on it,” Dubbeldam looked at his partner, “they said he was good but I never imagined that he could be this good.”

“How do you know he didn’t have a magic eye or something like that British Staatstovenaar?”

“We checked him for that,” Dubbeldam sat on the bed, “and our scans confirmed that he wasn’t using any form of Mage Sight.”

“So how did he know you were there?” Bisseling asked, “how could he have known?”

“Skill,” Dubbeldam replied in a whisper, “he saw my footprints or maybe he heard me breathing, and he left this picture as a lesson.”

“What kind of lesson?”

“That if you are going to follow somebody under an Invisibility Cloak, you should remember that you leave other signs and that people have other senses.” Dubbeldam stood up, “remember that lesson, while I doubt that you will ever have cause to deal with someone like Mr. Black in the future, it is best to remember that everyone can get lucky.”

“I will,” Bisseling blinked at the picture, “where do you suppose Mr. Black came from, what kind of place turns out men like him?”

“I don’t know, he might be an Onspreekbare or he might be from another sort of department that we haven’t even heard of. One thing I do know,” Dubbeldam voice firmed as he stood up, “he isn’t any kind

of Staatstovenaar, otherwise we'd have heard about someone this good before now."

"To start with, I would like to thank everyone for coming to this meeting of the Order of the Phoenix." Albus Dumbledore looked over the group of people, "as always, it warms my heart to see so many people dedicated to the fight against the dark."

Several members of the group applauded politely as the Headmaster finished his opening remarks.

"I have called this meeting for several reasons," Albus began after the applause trailed off, "the first is to give everyone an update on our search for Harry Potter and the second is to allow you all a chance to hear some intriguing new information discovered by one of our members, Kingsley if you would start."

The tall Auror stood, "so far we have turned up nothing in our search for 'The-Boy-Who-Lived,' though we have ruled out the possibility that he is hiding in one of England's magical enclaves, and the current thought is that he has probably used his knowledge of the muggle world to find a suitable place to hide."

"Thank you Kingsley," Albus nodded happily, "Bill?"

"Harry's account has not had any withdrawals for quite some time . . ." the red head trailed off.

"What is it?" Dumbledore prompted.

"Something is bothering me," Bill replied absent mindedly, "not sure what it is though."

"I have faith that you will figure things out in due time," Dumbledore nodded, "I believe that you had another matter you wished to discuss before we adjourn Alastor."

"One thing," the scarred man agreed, "few days ago, four death eaters were involved in an attack in Amsterdam."

"Why didn't we hear about this before?" Shacklebolt asked curiously.

“Because the four of them were put down before they had a chance to cast a single spell,” Moody replied with an evil looking leer.”

“Dutch Aurors have some sort of field to detect magical transport?” Kingsley mused.

“No,” Mad Eye’s leer became more pronounced, “they had the misfortune to appear before a man by the name of Black who became slightly annoyed at having his meal interrupted.”

“And?” Dumbledore leaned forward in interest.

“And he hit the lot of them with a dozen Reductor Curses, had em’ down before they could blink.” He let out a harsh wheezing laugh, “man I know in Dutch Law Enforcement tells me that whatever else he is this man is a serious player, said that he spotted every one of the tails they put on him.”

“You think we could recruit him?” Dumbledore asked hopefully.

“Too soon to tell,” Moody snorted, “though I doubt that he would be willing to work here if he’s as good as they say he is, and if he isn’t as good then I don’t think that we should waste the resources to find him. So at the moment my advise is to wait and see if we can get more information.”

Harry smiled as he got off the train and took his first breath of Parisian air. Looking around, he made the split decision to do a bit of sight seeing before going off in search of a hotel room and at the moment his first inclination was to head towards the tower that had for generations defined the Paris skyline.

Hailing a taxi, Harry told the driver to take him to Eiffel Tower and then sunk back into his seat to enjoy the car’s air-conditioning.

“Wake up,” the driver’s voice pulled Harry back to consciousness, “we have arrived.”

“Thank you,” Harry paid the man his fee and left the cab, walking towards the great elevators that serviced the tower.

Looking past the crowds of people waiting in line, Harry stepped up to a small ticket booth that went unnoticed by the majority of the people waiting in line.

“How may I help you?” The attendant in the booth asked with a raised eyebrow.

“I would like to visit one of the observation decks,” Harry answered with a smile.

“This booth is for magical sections only,” the attendant replied with a board tone, “would you still like to buy a ticket?”

Harry purchased the ticket with a nod assuming that the magical section would be less crowded than the non magical one, “what now?”

“Go towards one of the normal elevators and step inside, the ticket will do everything else.”

“Thank you,” Harry nodded politely and then walked towards one of the elevators, noting with surprise the way people seemed to take no note of his presence among their number.

Stepping into one of the elevators Harry’s excitement grew as it began its trip to the highest level.

“Wait one moment sir,” the conductor stopped Harry before he had a chance to leave the elevator, “we haven’t reached your stop yet.”

The doors closed and then opened without any perceptible movement of the car, “here we are sir.”

“Thank you,” Harry nodded to the conductor, “and have a good day.”

“You as well,” the conductor called out in reply as the doors of the elevator closed once more.

Stepping out onto the deck, Harry found that his earlier assumption that the magical section would be less crowded was true. Looking

around, he found that the observation deck was empty save a small man and his larger female companion.

Walking towards the two to get a glance of the magnificent view, Harry began to hear bits of a rather . . . odd conversation.

“Look at the lines Henggirl,” the little man gestured towards one of the supporting beams, “can you imagine a more elegant way to construct this tower?”

The girl shook her head in silent wonder as she admired a line of rivets, “it is truly wondrous.” She agreed, “But Professor, when shall we get a chance to make our own masterpiece?”

“Soon Henggirl soon, I feel that we are not yet ready to embark on such a project.” The little man answered sadly, “We must allow our selves to learn all the mysteries of science before we create another such wondrous structure.”

“Yes,” the ‘henggirl’ struck a dramatic pose, “but some day the world will gasp in awe upon seeing the marvels that we work.”

“Yes,” the small man stopped upon noticing Harry’s approach, “it appears that we have a visitor.”

“Good afternoon,” Harry nodded politely, “may I ask what you are doing?”

“What we are doing is admiring the design of this amazing engineering masterpiece, we do it because our job, no our passion is to meld the wonders of science with the mysteries of magic to create perfection,” he answered proudly. “To do so, we must familiarize ourselves with great feats of engineering like this tower here.”

“Oh?” Harry regarded the two curiously.

“Yes,” the little man answered proudly, “and I can see by the fact that you have not recoiled in horror that you share my vision of combining magic and technology.”

“I suppose,” Harry shrugged, “or it could be that I don’t know enough to recoil in horror.”

“Nonsense,” the little man disagreed, “I can tell that you are a man of intelligence and refinement so allow me to introduce myself, I am Professor Fergus Farnsworth and this is my henchgirl, Henchgirl.”

“Hello,” Henchgirl waved.

“And together we are the greatest team of magical engineers that the world has ever seen.” The two of them gave Harry a look of anticipation.

“I’m . . . Mr. Black, and I’m just a guy on vacation.”

“Pleased to meet you Mr. Black,” the Professor shook his hand, “would you care to aid us in our expedition through the mysteries of life?”

“And what exactly would that entail?” Harry asked the diminutive Professor.

“Do you know what the most difficult part of my job is Mr. Black?” The Professor asked in a flamboyant way, “It’s thinking of what to make next.”

“Huh?”

“Take my steam powered hair brush for example,” the Professor continued, “it was a marvel of engineering, a wonder of spell-work, but nobody uses it.”

“It weighted nineteen pounds,” Henchgirl supplied helpfully.

“Yes well,” the Professor glared at his assistant, “Henchgirl and I have no problem with the science and the spell-work, but we find ourselves unable to find worthy projects to devote our time to. And so Mr. Black we are asking you to help us.”

“Ah,” Harry nodded in understanding, “but why are you asking me?”

“Two reasons Mr. Black, the first being that you have not run away or berated us for our ‘idiotic’ goal and ‘muggle loving’ ways.”

“And the second?”

“I notice that you are wearing an odd pair of glasses Mr. Black, of a kind most often used by archivists and people in . . . government service.” The Professor smiled nervously, “and that you are wearing a rather interesting bracelet that is the cause of the rather interesting magical effect that makes it difficult for me to focus on your facial features, a bracelet usually used by criminals and people in . . . government service.”

“Items which are also useful for a tourist that wishes to blend in better than is normal,” Harry answered honestly, “but I still don’t see why you want my help.”

The Professor licked his lips nervously, “I do not believe that you are an archivist Mr. Black, and I hope that you are not a criminal. I have heard a rumor that a man matching your characteristics foiled an attack by a dozen Death Eaters in Holland, and I was hoping that a man of your experience might have an idea for an item or two that would be useful in his line of work.”

“It was four Death Eaters, not a dozen,” Harry grinned, “and I’m still not sure how I can help you.”

“Just tell us some of the problems that you have experienced with your equipment or any of your perceived needs,” the little man replied quickly.

“Ah,” Harry nodded in understanding, “you want me think up things like . . . a more durable wand or something.”

“A more durable wand?” The Professor repeated dumbly.

“Friend of mine had his wand broken a few years ago, caused all sorts of problems.” Harry smiled in remembrance, “ended up being a good thing in the end when another man got his hands on it.”

"I see," the Professor made eye contact with his henchgirl, "and a wand that could not break would have been useful to this friend of yours?"

"I suppose that I'm not too good at this huh," Harry shook his head ruefully, "but at least you didn't waste too much time with me."

"Not at all Mr. Black," the Professor answered quickly fearful that he would not hear anymore, "I find your story to be quite fascinating, elegant in its simplicity. What other problems have you experienced with wands?"

"Well," Harry scratched his head, "I've had my wand taken and used for purposes that I would not approve, so some sort of security feature would be nice."

"Anything else?" The professor asked as to write notes frantically.

"I can't think of anything else," Harry shrugged then added with a laugh, "though you could look up Ministry regulations and find ways circumvent everyone they have concerning wands."

"Thank you for your excellent suggestions Mr. Black. And now that our business is concluded, would you care to dine with us?"

"I'd be delighted," Harry nodded to his two new friends, "where do you suggest we go?"

Thoughts on France from Harry's book, 'Everything you will Ever Need to Know while Traveling around the World.'

France is a wonderful country and in it you can find many wonderful things, from the lights of Paris to the beaches of the Riviera, you can have many unique experiences in this delightful country. However there are a few things that one should know before embarking on your trip to France, among these things is the fact that the 'Agonie Curse,' a curse that is similar to the Cruciatus Curse is illegal to perform within the borders of France; another illegal charm is the 'Masque Charm,' a charm that when cast makes it difficult to track the individual wand signatures needed by Aurors to help solve crimes. In short, there are a lot of spells that are illegal to perform in France,

spells that for one reason or another are legal to perform in many other countries. What follows is a complete list of spells forbidden in France complete with incantations and wand movements, this list is cross referenced with the in other country sections and should be studied for academic purposes only.

AN: What happened with chapter four before was, I was attempting to replace chapter three with another chapter three that had a few mistakes corrected and wacky hi jinx ensued, sorry about that. Onspreekbare is Dutch for Unspeakable.

Rawiya – Thanks

relative1983 – I'm not Dutch, so it's a good thing you used English. I didn't use Euros for two reasons, one the Harry Potter books take place in the 90's, and two it is the Wizarding community that Harry used the Guldens in.

Fangalla Marie - Poor Harry will end up one of the most feared men in the world by the end of his trip.

musashi47 – Thanks

Keronshara - Padamus Da Grim Nomed, Padfoot the grim named.

In which we meet the Intrepid Reporter

Mrs. White

It was a particularly overcast day when the Postman made one of his rare trips up a walkway belonging to the house of one of the more . . . unusual people on his route. A man whose eccentricity's was rivaled only by that of a family of redheads on one of the neighboring routes.

Knocking cautiously, the government servant wondered idly what sort of nonsensical conversation the odd man would attempt to drag him into this time. Would it be a dissertation on the possible existence of 'crumple horned snooks' or a theory that one of the Ministers was a surgically altered monkey.

Sighing in annoyance, he walked the last few steps to the threshold and knocked on the door.

"Yes?" A confused looking middle aged man answered the door immediately, "is it time to buy a box of Scout biscuits again?"

"No Sir," the postman forced a smile, "I'm here to deliver your letter, not sell you something to eat with your tea."

"Oh yes," the man's eyes lit with comprehension, "I forgot that you're still not using trained animals to do it for you."

"Not yet Mr. Lovegood," the postman agreed through pursed lips, "my job is a bit too complicated to give to a trained animal."

"Well give it time," Laetus Lovegood replied sympathetically, "I'm sure you'll figure out the trick to it soon."

"Well, I really must get back on my rounds." The postman said, abruptly ending the conversation. "And don't forget that you can always come into town and get your mail there, you don't always have to take the time waiting for me to arrive."

“Nonsense,” Laetus waved it off with a smile, “I’m sure that you’d miss the wonderful conversations that we always find ourselves engaging in.”

“I’m sure,” the postman agreed in disappointment, then turned to begin the short walk back to the road.

Laetus smirked as he watched the man leave, always keep them confused. Keep them confused that was his motto, make it so they never notice that they forgot to ask you any important questions, like ‘what are you doing in my bedroom?’ or ‘you’re looking for what a what?’

Resisting the urge to chuckle until after he had closed the door, the patriarch of the Lovegood clan glanced at the return to block to get some idea of the contents of the letter.

Blinking at the unfamiliar name, Laetus tore open the letter and stared dumbly at the pictures within.

“Luna,” he called in a whisper. Clearing his voice, the next summons came at a yell. “LUUUNA, come quickly!”

“What is it father?” The young girl blinked in confusion, “is it national yell for your daughter day?”

“There is no national yell for your daughter day.” His lips pursed in annoyance, “those close minded idiots at the ministry rejected our proposal for it last year.”

“I know, I was hoping that they had reconsidered and decided to approve it,” Luna answered sweetly. “If that wasn’t it, then what?”

“Look at these pictures,” he handed them to his little girl, “and tell me what you think.”

“Oh father,” Luna bounced in excitement, “I just knew we’d find proof eventually.”

“I know and I can’t wait to see the looks on people’s faces when they see this in tomorrows edition,” Laetus allowed himself to share his

daughter's excitement, "but let's find out a few things about this Black fellow before we write up the article."

"I thought you said that checking facts was a waste of time for a serious paper like ours?" Luna gave her father a puzzled look, "that even without bothering to confirm the details, we were still better than the Prophet."

"Human interest my lovely daughter," Laetus's smile brightened, "the people will want to know more about this Black fellow, how he discovered the creatures, what kind of person he is, that sort of thing."

"I see," Luna nodded solemnly, "looks like I have a lot to learn before I can call myself a journalist of your caliber."

"Nonsense," Laetus waved it off, "why you're a hundred times the reporter that I was at your age, and that's why I want you to write this story."

"Me?" Luna clasped her hands in front of her chest, "but father, it's such an important story, shouldn't you give it to one of your best reporters?"

"I am giving it to one of my best reporters," he put his hand on her on the shoulder, "I want you to talk to someone at the Dutch consulate and try to get as many details about this Black fellow as you can, don't worry if you can't get anything right away, what matters is that we get a story out fast."

"I'll get right on it," Luna smiled, "thank you father."

"Get to it Lovegood," Laetus's eyes hardened, "I'm not paying you to slack off."

"Yes Sir Mr. Editor Lovegood Sir," Luna nodded happily, "Reporter Lovegood is on the case."

"Then get to it Lovegood," Laetus turned and began to walk away, "I have a deadline to make."

“Bye daddy,” Luna tossed a handful of floo powder into the fire, “I’ll be back soon.”

For several moments, Luna squealed in delight as she felt herself spin wildly around the floo network until finally she flew out of the fireplace and into the magical section of the Dutch Embassy to England.

“Name?” A stern looking man asked with a bland expression.

“Luna Lovegood, reporter for the 'The Quibbler' and I have a few questions I'd like you to answer,” she replied with an excited smile.

“What sort of questions Ms. Lovegood?”

“Oh wait,” Luna asked with a look of dismay, “can we do that again.”

“O . . K,” the man agreed shooting her a strange look. “Name?”

“Ms. White, Reporter for the Quibbler,” Luna shot him a superior look, “and I have a few questions that I need answered.”

“Ms. White?” The man inquired with a raised eyebrow.

“It gives a sense of mystery,” Luna giggled, “and the stern look puts you off balance, making you more likely to answer questions without considering the consequences. So how did you like it? Was I mysterious enough?”

“If you like,” the man shrugged, “what sort of questions would you like me to answer?”

“I need to know about a man that goes by the name,” Luna paused for dramatic effect, “Mr. Black.”

“I don't . . .” the man trailed off, “this way please.”

“Did my tough but approachable method of asking questions make you decide to leak a bit of confidential information that you would not have otherwise revealed?” Luna asked with an innocent expression.

“Please step into this room,” the man waved her towards an open door. “Someone will be with you momentarily.”

“Oh,” Luna nodded in understanding, “word of my presence has reached an unnamed senior official that has decided to leak some high level information to me.”

“Something like that,” the man shot her an odd look before closing the door and leaving.

Taking a seat, Luna entertained herself by singing the Hogwarts song . . . in Pig Latin.

After her thirty fifth repetition, the door cracked open.

“Ms. Love . . . White?” An attractive looking woman in nondescript robes entered the room, “my name is Anne Van Der Mijer, and I've been told that you have a few questions for me?”

“Yes,” Luna nodded happily, “I was wondering what you could tell me about him?”

“Aside from what I observed when I spoke with him after the incident, not much.” The woman admitted with a shrug, “what do you want to know first?”

“First, why don't you tell me your account of the incident.” Luna asked evenly, fighting to keep the disinterest out of her voice, father always did say that 'a good reporter hides their interest by allowing the interviewee to think that they controlled the situation.

“I was part of the team that responded to the call and when we arrived we found Mr. Black standing over four Death Eaters.” Van Der Mijer gave a cold smile, “forensics confirmed that Black put them all down before they even had a chance to get a spell off.”

“I didn't realize that he was so skilled,” Luna had to bite the inside of her cheek to keep from laughing, “what are some of your perceptions of the man?”

"I don't know which country he came from but he's a professional," Van Der Mijer shook her head, "I had the chance to talk with him after he gave his report and he gave me some good advice on how to deal with Death Munchers, 'put them down, keep them down, and never turn you back.'"

"I see," Luna nodded and fighting to keep the interest from her voice asked her next question, "did you by chance have a chance to see what his diet consisted of?"

"I'm not sure, but I think that I recall him having some sort of meat dish when I had lunch with him." The woman replied in an off handed manner, "but why are you asking about that?"

"About what?" Asked innocently as she forced her eyes to focus on a point three feet behind the woman.

"I . . . never mind," the Dutch Law Enforcement Officer shot a strange look at Luna, "what else do you want to know?"

"Well," Luna began slowly, trying to decide if the time was right for another of her 'fake questions.' "What sort of organization do you think that he works for: Law Enforcement, Department of Magical Creatures?"

"I don't think that he's an Auror," Van Der Mijer replied after a moment of thought, "Law Enforcement is a small community and I'm sure I would have heard about someone like him before he appeared in Amsterdam."

"I see," Luna nodded, "so do you think that he works for the Department of Magical Creatures?"

"I don't think he works for the Department of Magical Creatures," Van Der Mijer answered flatly, "whenever we asked he just replied that he was nobody special, that he was 'just a man on vacation.' I think that he might be something like one of your Unspeakables, or possibly something that we've never even heard of."

"Ok," Luna nodded happily, "was he missing any of the fingers on his right hand, or did he have an extra finger on his left?"

"Not that I noticed," the Dutch woman answered, "nor did I notice any other distinguishing marks."

"Did he speak with an accent that you could recognise?"

"He spoke perfect Dutch with a Haarlem accent, and he was later heard to speak perfect Swedish with a Stockholm accent," the Dutch woman gave a tight smile. "And finally, one of my associates has confirmed that he speaks perfect French with a Paris accent. Whoever trained this man did a very good job."

"I see," Luna gathered up her assorted notes and resolved to end with one of her useless questions, "I have one more question before I wrap things up, just how good is he?"

"He's so good it's scary, he spotted every one of our tails with little or no effort." Van Der Mijer gave Luna a serious look, "if I were a criminal and I learned that he was coming after me, I'd turn myself in and hope like hell that they gave me a nice long stay in prison where it would be to inconvenient to come get me."

"Thank you for your time Ms. Van Der Mijer," Luna gave the Dutch woman a vacant smile, "now if you'll excuse me, I have a story to write."

Luna's mind was awash with thoughts as she tumbled out of the floor network and into her house, "Father."

"What is it Luna?" The man asked as he entered the room, "did you get the interview."

"Yes father, and I learned some rather shocking news."

"Yes?" Laetus asked with a raised eyebrow.

"It appears that all of our theory's were wrong," Luna replied quickly, "I have reason to believe that Mr. Black was not on a diet consisting of nothing but rutabagas and goat cheese before he took the picture, Mr. Black was not missing a finger on his right hand, and he did not have an extra finger on his left hand." Luna took a deep breath, "last of all, he did not speak with a pronounced Monrovia accent."

"I see," Laetus pursed his lips, "it appears that our theory's about the specific requirements that needed to be met before seeing a Crumplehorned Snorlack were in error."

"Could it be that we were just looking in the wrong place?" Luna asked innocently, "remember, sometimes the simple answers are the correct ones."

"It's possible," Laetus admitted, "but I think the situation might be a bit more complicated than it first appears."

"Well, we still have a few hours before the story needs to be written." Luna patted her father on the shoulder, "plenty of time to go over my transcripts of the interview to find out what the real answer is."

The two of them immediately went to work, scrutinizing every word and remark made by the Dutch woman, weighing every statement against the facts that they knew to be true until finally . . . "I think that I've figured it out father," Luna closed her eyes, "and I was correct, it was so simple that I almost disregarded it."

"What is it?" Laetus leaned forward, eager to hear his daughter's thoughts.

"What do you know happens in the Department of Mysteries?"

"I know of quite a few things, why?" He asked with a look of interest.

"But it's suppose to be the most secure place in our world," Luna began to smile, "so why do you know what happens within it's walls. And while we are on the subject, how is it that a bunch of school children were able to break in?"

"Well . . . " his eyes widened, "your not suggesting?"

"Exactly," Luna nodded triumphantly, "the Department of Mysteries is nothing more than a false lead, something to keep people from considering the existence of the real secret."

"Another Department," Laetus smiled in approval, "a Department so secret that no hint of it's existence has ever reached the public."

"Until now," Luna nodded, "it is my guess that this unnamed Department discovered the circumstances needed to see the Crumplehorned Snorlack, and then sent this man 'Mr. Black' to cast some sort of spell to allow normal people to see them."

"I think you may be on to something," Laetus stroked his chin, "but it still doesn't explain why he worked so openly."

"I think that we're going to have to assume that he was telling the truth," Luna pointed to the appropriate section of the transcript, "he's a man on vacation, possibly after his retirement. He doesn't care so much about secrecy at the moment."

Crumplehorned Snorlacks Found In Holland

by Mrs. White

It has long been the Quibbler's assertion that there are mysteries yet to be solved and creatures yet to be discovered. This refusal of ours to accept the commonly held view has long been cause for ridicule among the Quote main stream media . . .

Who is Mr. Black

by E. Nigma

Very little is known about the man that is responsible for the pictures that grace the front of this news paper. We do know that he is a man of exceptional skill and cunning, as evidenced by an incident in Holland in which Mr. Black defeated four Death Eaters before they had a chance to cast a spell . . .

AN: Sorry this took so long, but in the last few weeks I have moved to Hiroshima

(Japan) and my life has been rather busy. I hope to have more updates soon.

Megami101 – Not SLASH, don't have any problem with it but it's not my thing and I don't write it. No pairings at the moment, but I wouldn't expect a Harry/Ginny pairing.

Lady-Elizabeth4242 – Order of the Lion

A Series of Fortunate Events

"Thanks for the meal Professor," Harry turned to wave to his dining companions as he walked towards the line of waiting cabs, "and good luck with your inventions."

"Thank you again for your help Mr. Black," the Professor smiled, "and don't forget to meet up with us in Germany."

"I won't," Harry nodded as stepped into the first cab, "goodbye."

"Goodbye," Henggirl waved until the cab turned a corner and faded from sight, "do you think we'll ever see him again Professor?"

"It's hard to say Henggirl," the Professor sighed, "he may decide that it's best not to draw us into his world."

As Henggirl and the Professor continued their conversation about the mysterious Mr. Black, across the street a similar conversation was taking place between a striking young woman and her dog.

"Stepped into the first cab," the beautiful young woman gave a rather unladylike snort, "looks like the Dutch were having us on, nobody with any training would make a mistake as simple as that, it's the first thing they teach you in training."

"Which is why we didn't bother to place tracking charms on it. By getting into that cab, he's showing us why it's never a good idea to cut corners." Her poodle replied dryly, "face it kid, we're up against the best."

"That assumption seems to rely on the reports about his prowess being true," the woman smirked, "looks to me like you're twisting things to fit your pet theory."

"Six months out of training and they think they know everything," the dog shook his head in despair, "tell me then oh wise one what did he do immediately after stepping out of the restaurant?"

"He said goodbye to the people that he ate with," the woman spoke slowly as if to a child, "then he stepped into the first cab."

"He used that as an excuse to look around, and he looked right at us." The dog corrected, "what did he do after that?"

"He exchanged a few words with the aforementioned people," the woman bit her lower lip, "then got into a taxi."

"When he turned back from his greeting his eyes swept over the line of waiting cabs, and somehow he was able to pick the one car that you didn't hit with tracking spells."

"I didn't spell the last three either," the girl shrugged, "I still don't think it proves anything and I don't see what the big deal about him looking at us was."

"He looked at you, smirked and looked at me." The dog clarified, "he did a few other things that gave him away but those were the major points and we'll talk about the rest later."

"Oh," the woman looked down at the dog in shock, "so he's really that good?"

"Yes he is," the dog nodded, "now what have we learned today?"

"That we should always track the first cab," the woman nodded slowly, "no that we should never leave a hole no matter how small."

"And?"

"And that no matter how good you are, there is always someone better."

"One more thing," the dog gave a canine smile, "the most dangerous ones always try their hardest to look harmless."

"Is that why you insisted that I groom you and tie a pink bow around your neck before we went on this assignment?"

"Uh . . . yeees," the Poodle animagus agreed quickly, "glad that you're finally starting to learn how the world works."

"In any case, we'll find out how good he is after we search his rooms," the woman shot the poodle a sly grin, "I'll bet that he won't notice any signs of our presence."

"We'll see," the poodle sighed, "now let's go, we have an early morning tomorrow and I would like to get a bit of sleep first."

Harry again awoke early and his day was filled with wondrous sights, La Musee des Armes in the morning and the Folies Bergere at the Moulin Rouge in the evening.

And so, head filled with the sights, sounds, and smells that he had experienced in his wonderful day of discovery. Harry returned to his hotel room for another night of rest.

The next day, Harry quickly discovered that after the first few days of sightseeing, his enthusiasm for experiencing new things was quickly being dampened by his hatred of standing in lines.

And after spending two hours waiting, he amused himself with the thought that Paris should have its motto changed from 'the city of lights' to 'the city of lines' due to the fact that there was a large cue of tourists lined up to see virtually everything of any interest.

"That's it," Harry muttered to himself as he gave up his place in the line to enter the Louvre, "I am not in the mood for this."

Returning to his hotel room, Harry wasted no time returning the few loose items to their place in his pack.

"I'm checking out," Harry gave a strained smile to the man behind the desk as he returned the key to his room.

"Is there something wrong?" the clerk asked quickly, "you didn't have any problems with our service did you?"

"Nothing wrong with the service," Harry assured the man.

"Then why?"

"Let's just say, I don't have the patience needed to see more of Paris." Harry replied ending the conversation.

Walking out the of his former hotel and hailed a cab, "take me to Gare de Lyon." Harry ordered the driver as he leaned back in the seat, trying to enjoy the next leg of his journey.

Not long after Harry checked out of his hotel, a group of shadowy figures gathered around a large table, to meet and discuss possible implications of Mr. Black's latest moves.

"Well, what were you able to learn by going through Mr. Black's things?" Asked the figure at the head of the table.

"We learned that it is entirely possible that Mr. Black has a type of perimeter charm that we were unable to even detect." One of the figures at the side of the table replied, "within moments of our black bag team entering his hotel room, they had to abort on orders of the observation team."

The observation team leader took over. "Mr. Black muttered 'that's it' and 'I'm not in the mood for this.' He then hailed a cab and ordered the driver to return him to his hotel. And it was then that we ordered the abort" The woman paused, "I think that it would be prudent note that he hailed was the one that I was driving."

"I see," the man at the head of the table nodded thoughtfully. "What is the current status of Mr. Black?"

"He has checked out of his hotel room and is currently in Gare de Lyon." The head of the observation team replied quickly.

"What prompted his departure?" The figure at the head of the table asked with a raised eyebrow.

"He informed the hotel clerk that he didn't 'have the patience needed to see more of Paris.' We speculate that Mr. Black was annoyed by our our intrusion into his room and decided to cut his time in our city."

"Annoyed?" The figure at the head of the table motioned for clarification.

"Yes," the Observation team leader confirmed. "His manner gave nothing to suggest anger rather," she paused, "rather similar to my reaction when I had discovered that my three year old daughter had decided to draw on the wall with crayon."

"I need a ticket for the next train leaving for Marseilles," Harry told the cashier, not noticing as his accent shifted to match his destination.

"One moment sir," the cashier nodded, "here you are, your train will be leaving within the hour."

"Thank you," Harry nodded politely as he took the ticket, "I trust that your associates will have a good day."

"Yes Sir," the ticket agent nodded back, hiding his surprise. "Will you be requiring anything else?"

"No"

It did not take long for Harry to find his train and stowing his pack, he closed his eyes and allowed himself to transition into the world of dream.

Harry pulled himself from the land of dreams as the train began to slow. Shaking his head to awake fully, Harry pulled the travel guide from his ruck sack and began to read.

Marseilles at nearly 2600 years old is considered by many to be the oldest city in France. There are many interesting things that can be learned about the city and its past. But since you bought this book then the it can be assumed that you don't care about any of that. On to the fun stuff, the main magical sections of Marseilles are located off the section of town known as Le Vieux Port and can be reached through several places which are listed in an appendix at the end of this section. The most discreet of these is a small alley located between an old drinking establishment named Le Lion and another old drinking establishment named L'Unicorne. The alley runs for several meters before opening up into the cross roads of the Rue de la Mal Absolu (also known as the Rue de Chiotte) and the Rue de la Saintete.

Closing the book, Harry took his first look out the window at the city of Marseilles taking in the wonder of visiting another location.

Stepping off the train, Harry raised his hand to hail the nearest cab.

“Where to?”

“Take me to the best hotel nearby.” Harry paused, “after that I have somewhere else that I’d like to go if you’re willing to wait.”

“I’m willing,” the cab driver nodded as he pulled out into traffic. “What brings you to our city?”

“Just taking a bit of time to relax,” Harry shrugged.

“Sounds nice, what you do?”

“Nothing important,” Harry sidestepped the question. “How do you like your job?”

“I find it very enjoyable,” the driver nodded. “Every day I get to meet new people and learn new things.”

“I see,” Harry nodded, “and how are the working conditions?”

“They’re alright, good benefits. . . what about you, how are your conditions?”

“Not as safe as one might wish,” Harry turned up his hands, “but what can you do.”

“Not much, I’d guess?”

“Just got to learn to go with the flow.”

“So where did you go before coming here?”

“Paris”

“How long did you stay?”

“Not long, had to cut my visit short,” Harry answered quickly.

“Why?”

“Lack of patience,” Harry straightened up as the cab pulled to a stop in front of a hotel, “I hope I don't have any reason to cut short my visit to Marseilles.”

“I'm sure you won't Mr. Black,” the driver mumbled to himself as he watched his fare walk into the hotel lobby, “you made your point in Paris.”

The driver waited for several minutes for his client to reappear.

“Take me to Le Vieux Port,” Harry commanded as he got back into the cab, “there are a few places that I'd like to visit before we run out of daylight.”

“Right away, any particular place?”

“A small pub called 'Le Lion' if you know where that is.”

“I do sir,” the driver nodded, the remainder of the ride passed in silence as the driver did not wish to annoy his passenger. “Here we are sir,” the driver told his passenger as the cab slid to a halt.

“Thank you,” Harry stepped out, “and have a nice day.”

“You too, thank you sir.”

Harry walked towards the two old 'drinking establishments' that marked one of the entrances to wizard's section of Marseilles. Frowning in concentration when no alley presented itself, Harry took a step closer and resisted the urge to blink in surprise when the alley appeared.

Taking an experimental step back, Harry blinked when the alley disappeared. Shrugging his shoulders, Harry stepped forward and entered the alley.

The light began to fade and the air began to chill as Harry walked deeper and deeper into the alleyway.

Stopping, Harry allowed his senses to explore his surroundings and caught a bit of movement in the corner of his eye was his only warning that he was not alone.

Situational Awareness, the act of knowing your exact location in relation to your everything around you in a conflict situation. Harry had developed his at an early age. Urged on by the fact that one wrong move would earn him a beating and a missed meal, he quickly learned to always be aware of his surroundings and years of Quiddich had only served to sharpen that awareness.

Reflexively turning to get a closer look, Harry hissed as he felt a sharp pain in his back.

"I don't know how you managed to move fast enough to stay alive," a dirty looking man holding a large bloody knife and dressed in rags leered evilly, "but I don't think you can do it twice."

A deep rage began to build as Harry stared at the blood covered knife, and a wave of accidental magic shot from the hands that Harry had instinctively raised.

"Nobody move," Harry's shadows arrived just in time to watch a wave of force throw Harry's attacker into the alley's wall.

Wand drawn, one of the men carefully approached the fallen figure. Kicking the bloody knife out of reach he bent down to check the man's pulse, "dead, broken neck."

One of the figures relaxed upon hearing the announcement and approached the still standing Harry, "are you alright sir?"

"I'm not sure," Harry reached back to probe his injury, "I think I've been stabbed, but I can't tell how serious it is."

"I'm a healer, do you mind if I take a look then sir?"

"Go ahead," Harry nodded and lifted his shirt to allow easy access, "how does it look."

"Give me a moment," the healer gently probed the wound with her finger, "doesn't look like anything serious was hit, give me a few moments to close it up and you'll be good as new."

"Thank you," Harry nodded in appreciation. "I . . ."

"Sorry to interrupt," another of the Law Enforcement officers commented quietly, "but do you mind if I ask you a few questions while the healer takes a look at your wound?"

"Go ahead, I just wanted to compliment you on how fast you arrived. Almost as if you were following me around," Harry joked.

"Yes, well . . . should we start," the man stammered.

"Sure, what do you want to know."

"Why don't you tell me what happened?"

"I was walking down the alley, I stopped, saw something out of the corner of my eye and got stabbed." Harry gave a weak grin. "Then I turned, the man made some sort of threat, and I used accidental magic to throw him into the wall."

"I see," the man made several notes, "why didn't you use your wand?"

"It all happened so fast that I didn't have time to pull it out," Harry managed a weak smile, "and I guess that it's a good thing I didn't, otherwise I might be guilty of violating the laws against practicing magic in front of non magical people."

"I wouldn't worry about that Mr. Black," the man looked down at his notes, "seems your attacker was carrying an enchanted dagger and a few other enchanted items."

"Still, he could have just picked them up by accident and I always try to stay on the right side of the law."

"I see," the man made a few more notes, "just for the sake of my curiosity, I'm wondering if you would allow me to ask one more question?"

"What's that?"

"Why don't you think the 'Self Defense' exemption would protect you from performing magic against you assailant?"

"Because I've had too much experience dealing with incompetent and corrupt officials," Harry shrugged innocently, "so I think that it's better for all concerned that I used accidental magic rather than my wand."

"I see, thank you Mr. Black." The man closed his notebook, "you've been most helpful."

"No problem," Harry smiled, "glad to be of help."

"Good bye, Mr. Black."

"Good bye," Harry nodded and then turned to the healer tending to his wound. "How does it look?"

"I'll give you a couple potions to drink and you'll be just fine" "Thanks, you've all been so helpful and nice." Harry smiled, "even the interviewer. His technique was so calm and relaxed that I don't even remember telling him my name."

"Oh," the healer smiled nervously. "I'm sure that he'll be glad to hear that."

"Would you mind waiting here for a moment?" The woman gave a weak laugh, "I need to go talk to my boss about a few things."

"No problem," Harry agreed, "anything to make your life less difficult."

"Thank you," the healer turned and began walking quickly toward a group of gathered people."

"How's Mr. Black doing?"

"Knife missed by about three centimeters," the Healer winced as she recalled treating the wound, "I'd say this Mr. Black is either very lucky or that he some of the best reflexes that I've ever seen."

"I see," the nondescript man grunted, "did you notice any signs of past injuries?"

"Several," the Healer turned to her notes, "multiple scars, broken bones, and some odd readings on his blood."

"Explain odd"

"I'd really like to get it to the lab before I commit myself," the women hedged."

"I just want a preliminary report," he held his hand up, "nobody is going to blame you if you make a mistake here."

"Well," she bit her lower lip, "I was a bit worried that the blade could have been poisoned, so I hit it with a minor detection spell."

"And?"

"And the reading were off the charts," the woman frowned, "according to what I was seeing, there was enough poison on the blade to kill a hundred men. There was no way that Mr. Black could have been walking around."

"So you miscast your spell, so what?"

"That's what I thought, so I tried again using a much more accurate spell. The results were shocking." She took a calming breath, "it wasn't the blade that the blade was poisoned, it's that Mr. Black's blood contains some sort of deadly toxin. That caused me to look closer, and what I found . . . I can't even begin to explain."

"I see," the nondescript man licked his lips, "anything else?"

"Mr. Black also mentioned that Pierre slipped up and forgot to ask his name," the healer grinned, "he also complimented us on how fast we arrived, said it was almost as if we'd been following him."

"Certainly has a sense of humor doesn't he?" the nondescript man grinned, "anything to add Pierre?"

"You've all heard my report," the man who interviewed Harry replied, "I would like to ask how Mr. Black knew of this entrance, it's not exactly well known and hasn't seen much use since it was built by the Maqui."

"Good question, I'd also like to know how his target knew about this place. Do you have anything else to add?"

"No Sir"

"Then does anyone have anything else to add?" His question was met by silence, "then can anyone explain why a two bit thug was able to injure a man as good as we think Mr. Black is?"

"I might have an idea," a young woman cradling a poodle replied.

"Well then?"

"Through all of our dealings with Mr. Black one thing shines through," she scratched behind her partners ear. "Mr. Black likes to act dumb, the one time he showed what he was capable of was when we annoyed him by entering his hotel room."

"Go on."

"We heard Pierre's report, Mr. Black arranged everything to make it look like a clear cut case of self defense and an accidental death. When we entered his hotel room we . . . confused him, he wasn't sure how to react to us so he set up a situation that would get us laughed out of court if we tried send him to prison." She glanced down at her partner to see an approving nod, "he made everything look like some sort of strange coincidence and it frightens me to think that he was able to set this up under our noses in such a small amount to time, the level of professionalism that such a task would require boggles the mind."

"Then why do you think he chose that man as his target?"

"I might have an Idea Sir." The woman licked her lips, "forensics found the blood of several magical people on the dead man's clothing, it would look like he was targeting wizards. It is my guess that Mr. Black somehow learned of his activity's and decided to execute him."

"Execute?"

"What else would you call it? He calmly walked into the alley with the express purpose of killing that man and he was able to make it look like some sort of bizarre accident, like I said if we ever tried to bring this case to court we'd be laughing stocks." The woman shrugged, "for one reason or another Mr. Black didn't trust us to capture this man and he was unsure of our reaction if he took matters into his own hands so he manufactured this."

"Sounds like the most reasonable explanation any body's come up with so far," the nondescript man nodded, "he's made his point so with any luck he won't be so condescending when he does something like this in the future. Unless anybody has anything else to add this meeting is over, send Mr. Black on his way."

"I'll do it Sir," the healer volunteered, "I'd like to hit him with a stronger diagnostic charm, might help me make more sense of what I found in his blood."

"Fine, but don't annoy him any more than we already have."

"No problem," the healer nodded happily and walked back towards Mr. Black.

"How did your meeting go?" Harry smiled at the approaching healer.

"Fine, the boss says that you can leave any time you want," she took a deep breath, "but I'd like your permission to cast a few charms on you to get a better idea of your vital signs."

"Ok"

The woman made several complicated wand movements and muttered several rather odd incantations and finished with a rather . . . distracted look.

“Finished?” Harry asked with a small smile.

“Yeah, sure,” the woman responded with a dazed look.

“Anything I need to worry about?”

“Nothing seems to be bothering you,” the healer looked at her results again.

“I’ll just be going then”

As he left, Harry was sure that he heard the woman mutter 'none of this makes any sense' but he chalked it up to his overactive imagination and continued on his way.

AN: I'm not happy with the way this chapter 'jumps around' but no other solution presented its self and this is the way things turned out. Hope you like it and sorry my updates have been so slow.

It's in the Blood

Harry sat in his hotel room staring at the walls, he had killed again and he was unsure of how he was supposed to

feel about the fact that he had taken another life.

"I don't feel guilty," Harry mused to himself, "it was him or me and I'd rather it be him or me. I don't feel guilty

about it, but I also don't really want to stay around here any longer."

Harry stood up and packed the few items that he had removed from his Ruck and after taking one last look around

the room to make sure that he hadn't forgotten anything, Harry walked down to the lobby and checked out.

"I've got another assignment for you Lovegood," the Editor of the quibbler glared at his favorite reporter.

"Folks loved that article you wrote about Mr. Black, so I'm assigning you to write another."

"Ok daddy, er . . . I mean Chief." Luna gave a left handed salute, "reporter Lovegood is on the case."

"Black killed a man in Marseilles, I want to know everything about what happened." The Editor frowned,

"and none of that lone wolf stuff. The Commissioner's been on my ass all week about that bus you blew up."

"I thought that we were reporters not cops," Luna blinked at her father, "have you been taking your medicine again daddy?"

"We ran out of every flavor beans and my medicine has a candy coating," Luna's father looked down at his shoes.

“Besides, it was so far past its expiration date that I thought it would be fine.”

“Well don't take any more of it,” Luna put her hands on her hips. “You know it gives you crazy ideas.”

“I'm sorry honey,” he blushed, “it won't happen again.”

“It's ok daddy”

“Now get out there and get me that story Lovegood, I don't pay you to sit around.” The Quibbler's editor stormed out

of the room, “and if you have the time, could you get me a new box of candy?”

“Ok daddy, Reporter Lovegood is on it.”

Luna walked over to the fireplace and tossed in a hand full of floo powder, “French Magical Law Enforcement Marseilles.”

And after a few minutes of waiting

“Hello,” Luna squinted at the fire, “is anyone there?”

“My name is Pierre-Louis Boulanger, ” a man in an impeccably tailored robe answered the fire moments later.

“The Press information Officer of Magical Law Enforcement, what can I do for you?”

“Yes my name is . . . “ Luna took a few minutes to think up an appropriate alias, “Ms. Information and I was

wondering if I could ask you a few questions about Mr. Black?”

“One moment,” Pierre-Louis stalled for time as he tried to think of the best spin to put on the story, “alright, please ask your questions.”

“What exactly happened?”

“For some months we've been tracking the movement of a serial killer targeting the magical community,” Pierre-Luis

licked his lips, the statement was a bit false as they had no prior indication of the killer's existence before Mr. Black killed him.

“Turns out the man was a Squib using the old Resistance tunnels and alley ways.”

“Go on,” Luna resisted the urge to smirk, it was so easy to get information if they were convinced that you already knew everything.

“We're not sure how but Mr. Black was able to track the man's movements,” he gave a shy smile, “Mr. Black confronted the man and . . .”

“And?” Luna prompted.

“And . . .” he stalled for time trying to remember what had happened next, “and Mr. Black knocked the knife out of the way

and broke the man's neck.”

“What spell did he use to break the man's neck?”

“Spell,” Pierre-Luis began to sweat, he had gotten his position as a Press Officer more on the merits of how splendid

he looked in his robes then for any other reason. “Mr. Black used no spell, he broke the man's neck with his bare hands.”

“Oh,” Luna looked impressed. “What else can you tell me about the incident?”

“Well we've been looking through the old records and we've found that the murder knew about the old Resistance places

because his father had been a member,” he smiled as a new thought rose to the surface. “But that still leaves us with one

unanswered question regarding the incident.”

“What's that?”

“How did Mr. Black know so much about the resistance network?”
The man leaned close to the fire, “what I'm about to

tell you must not be attributed to me, if you chose to use it, you must attribute it to an unnamed senior source.”

“If you think that's best,” Luna gave her best trusting smile.

“There has been some speculation that Mr. Black knew of them because he used them when they were most needed,”

the man took a deep breath. “Many of us believe that Mr. Black may have been one of the men that was sent to help the Resistance

to fight the forces of tyranny.”

“Wow,” Luna tried to make herself look impressed. “Does the French government plan to reward Mr. Black in anyway for his courage?”

“I've been told that he stands a good chance of being inducted into the Ordre National de la Légion d'Honneur

with the rank of Chevalier,” the man gave his most charming smile. “Nothing is too good for the man that rid us of such a terrible killer.”

“I see,” Luna nodded. “When did Mr. Black leave France?”

“Leave?” Pierre-Luis blinked. “To the best of my knowledge, he's still here.”

“What?” Luna shot up from her seat. “Please move aside, I'll be coming through momentarily.”

Hastily moving aside, Pierre-Louis narrowly avoided the excited reporter. “Was there some reason that you chose to continue our interview in person?”

“Quick,” Luna's eyes acquired a maniacal gleam. “You must show me the way to Mr. Black's hotel room.”

Flinching at the look in the crazed reporter's eyes, Pierre-Louis was quick to agree and arrange transportation for the two of them.

"What room is Mr. Black in?" Luna shouted to her escort as they ran towards the hotel entrance.

"None of them." A woman with a poodle called out, halting Luna's advance.

"What do you mean?" Luna fought to keep her disappointment from showing.

"He checked out and left about fifteen minutes ago," the woman shrugged, "you just missed him."

"Oh," Luna blinked and turned to her escort, "then could you show me the alley where Mr. Black had his fight?"

"Before you go," the woman with the poodle interrupted, "would you mind telling me how long you've been planning to come here to interview Mr. Black?"

"About fifteen minutes," Luna looked around with a dazed expression. "ever since I found out he was still here."

"Thank you," the woman nodded politely.

"Guess that answers the question of why he left," the poodle commented to his partner, "but it still leaves the question of how he knew that she was coming."

"Looks like he either has a way of intercepting floo, or he's bugged the office." The woman speculated.

"The man is a god," the poodle commented in awe.

"We gotta get back to the office," the woman ignored her partner's loss of composure, "the healer is about to give her report on what she found."

“Activate the Portkey,” the poodle nodded, “I can't wait to find out what she was able to learn.”

“In three, two, one.” The two of them felt the pull of the Portkey and seconds later they appeared beside a large table.

“Good of you two to show up,” the man sitting at the table's head motioned towards a pair of seats. “Now that

everyone is here, I believe the healers would like to share their preliminary reports.”

“Thank you sir,” the healer nodded. “As many of you may know, I found something odd when I tested Mr. Black's

blood. It appeared to contain a deadly toxin so, after obtaining Mr. Black's permission I cast a series of diagnostic charms

and the results were astounding. Mr. Black has at one time or another broken nearly all the bones in his body and at sometime

in the near past he had to regrow all of the bones in one of his arms, he is covered in scars many of which were caused by the

darkest of magic. And as I said before his blood is rather . . . odd, I've spent nearly the entire afternoon testing the sample

that I recovered from the blade of the knife and I believe that I may have a partial explanation of why it is so toxic.”

“Go on”

“At some time in the past Mr. Black must have deliberately injected himself with a massive dose of Basilisk venom mixed

with Phoenix tears.” The woman rechecked her notes, “the tears counteracted the Venom's toxicity which is the reason

that Mr. Black is not dead, I was unsure of why he did this until I noticed that the Phoenix tears didn't have the same amount

of potency as I would expect from a fresh sample. So I double checked the blood sample, I noticed that while the Phoenix

tears had gotten weaker the Basilisk Venom maintained its potency and my results showed that Mr. Black should have

only a few months to live because of the tears losing their effectiveness.”

“So what you're saying is that Mr. Black is dieing?”

“No, that's what my first thought was until I started checking the data from my diagnostic charms and they showed that he

was healthier then one would expect after looking at his medical history. Somehow his body had adapted to the presence

of the Basilisk Venom possibly by absorbing the magic of the Phoenix tears. So it appears that the poison in his system will

never be a problem, in fact it wouldn't surprise me to learn that Mr. Black won't ever have to worry about most poisons.

I was happy to see that my first conclusions were mistaken and that Mr. Black was not going to die, but one thing still bothered me.”

“What was that?”

“Why did the potency of the Phoenix tears lessen while the potency Basilisk venom remain constant?” The woman

looked around the room, “one would think that there would be at least some change in the toxicity levels, that's when

I found this.” She tossed out a piece of parchment with a grainy image on it, “it appears that Mr. Black implanted a

small chip of Basilisk fang into the bones on one of his arms, this has the effect keeping his blood from becoming any less deadly.”

“Good work,” the man at the head of the table nodded, “do you have anything else to add?”

“One more thing,” the woman nodded. “I know what he did, I have some idea of how he did it, but I don't know why he did it.”

“Imagine a man that can never be disarmed, imagine an assassin that can bite his lip to access a rather large supply of some

of the most dangerous poison in the known world.” The figure shook his head, “the dedication this shows is amazing.”

“I have one more thing to add then sir,” the healer paled as she considered the implications of her superior's statement.

“Whoever designed this process must have been insane, I can't even Imagine the amount of precision needed to insure

that the proper dosages were applied at the proper times. Whoever this Mr. Black is, and whoever he works for, they

operate on a whole different level then we can even imagine.”

Elsewhere, Albus Dumbledore was presiding over a meeting of the Order of the Phoenix.

“I have some new orders for you in regards to the search for Harry Potter,” Dumbledore took a deep breath,

“I have been accused of treating Harry as an object, and it has been said that even if we did find Harry and return

him to his family's house then we would be forced to maintain a twenty four hour guard on Mr. Potter to prevent him from disappearing again.”

The headmaster's statements were met by several mutters and the old man held up his hand for silence, “I am not

suspending the search for Mr. Potter. I am changing it, if you find him inform the Order so we can devote our

resources to keeping him safe at his current location, an action which I hope will keep him happier than confining him with the Dursleys.”

“Why can't we just bring him here?” Molly asked, “or to the Burrow?”

“Those options remain open,” Dumbledore nodded, “but when the time comes I am going to allow Harry to decide his residence.”

Molly sat, satisfied that whatever happened the 'dear boy' would be happy.

“Now that we have settled one issue, I believe Alastor has something else that he'd like to bring to our attention.” Albus gave the floor to his old friend.

“Black's struck again,” Moody leered. “This time he killed a serial killer in Marseilles, the French seem to think that

he has access to undetectable charms and they speculate that he's either bugged their office or has found a way to monitor the floo.”

“Why didn't we hear about this killer before?” An anonymous member of the order asked.

“Cause the French didn't know about him till after Black executed him,” Moody chuckled. “Black set things up to look

like an accident, even used a bit of wandless magic, said it was accidental.”

“Thank you Alastor, that was most enlightening.” Dumbledore looked around the room, “I believe the next thing on

our agenda is a report by George and Fred Weasley on one of their latest inventions.”

Harry got out of his taxi at the mouth of the alley where he had earlier killed a man, and took a deep breath before stepping in.

This attempt to visit the magical section of Marseilles went much smoother than the last and his trip through the alley went without incident.

"Could you tell me where I can buy a Portkey out of the country?" Harry politely asked the first passerby.

"Up the street about fifty meters," the now sweating agent replied quickly, "store named Travelers Return."

"Thank you," Harry began walking in the indicated direction. After a short walk, Harry found himself in front of a

building covered with moving images of exotic locals.

"Can I help you?" Harry heard a young voice ask from behind, "I couldn't help but notice that you were staring at my

store and I was wondering if I might be of some assistance?"

"I would like a Portkey out of the country," Harry sighed. "Whatever you have available is fine."

"I had a cancellation earlier, so I have one going to Monte Carlo in," the man checked his watch, "three minutes."

"I'll take it," Harry nodded, "how much?"

"Since they canceled at the last minute, the Portkey was already paid for." The man shrugged, "and my conscience will

not allow me to sell the same item twice. Take it at no cost to yourself with my compliments."

"Thank you," Harry accepted a small round disk that he assumed to be a Portkey, "have a good . . ."

Harry's statement was cut off by the familiar pull of a Portkey taking him to the next stop on his journey.

"Would you like to place a bet sir?" Asked a man standing standing next to Harry at the head of a Roulette wheel.

“One moment,” Harry blinked and took a moment to look at his luxurious surroundings. “Could you repeat that?”

“I was asking if you wished to place a bet with the chip in your hand sir,” replied the man at the Roulette wheel.

“Sure,” Harry dropped the chip on a random number, “thank you.”

“Your most welcome Sir,” the man nodded and then turned away to accept more bets.

Shrugging and feeling no need to watch his lone chip disappear, Harry walked away from the table to explore his new

surroundings. He could now add gambling to his short list of life experiences, it wasn't like he needed to stick around to

know that he was going to lose . . . was it?

Harry spent several minutes drifting around the floor of the casino before finding the exit and several minutes after that

exploring the section of town that he had found himself in. Finally after nearly an hour of exploration, he ended up in a

seedy bar with a drink in his hand, the last thing he remembered was being challenged to a drinking contest by several Australian backpackers.

“Good afternoon Mr. Black,” a man in an odd yellow striped outfit greeted him, “are you feeling well?”

“Who are you?” Harry's mouth tasted like the floor of the Leaky Cauldron. “And where am I?”

“My name is Gunter Schmitt, a member of the Swiss Guard.” The man nodded respectfully, “you are in the Holy city of

the Vatican and I have a problem that I hope you can help me solve.”

“What's that?” Harry closed his eyes and hoped for the world to stop spinning.

“I would like you to inspect some new wards that we're having put up,” the replied calmly. “We asked some of our

contacts in the magical world for the name of a man that could be discreet and we were given yours.”

“I see,” Harry clinched his teeth to keep his stomach from jumping through his throat. “Why do you want me to inspect your wards?”

“A man was once contracted to build something out of marble, this man was supposed to use stone of only the highest

quality but he did not. Instead he bought stone of low quality and pocketed the difference. At the time there was another

man working in the same area, that man was widely regarded as one of the best artists of the age and he was also regarded

as the man that knew the most about stone. If anyone was to detect the substitution of low quality stone it would have been him.”

The guard shrugged, “so the first man found a way to keep the second busy and his crime went unnoticed. We do not intend to make the same mistake.”

“I don't know anything about wards,” Harry tried to sit up, “and I have no idea on how to check them.”

“You'll find a book on the end table next to your bed, in it is everything you need to know to perform the tasks we request of you.”

The guard stood and began walking towards the exit, “and a uniform like mine is in the closet. If you chose to help us then read the

book and put on the uniform, if you decide not to then knock on the door and someone will arrive to escort you out.”

“I'll think about it,” Harry replied through clenched teeth. “In the mean time, would you mind sending up a bottle of pain killers and some water?”

“I'll have them send up a few things to help with your stomach too,” the guard paused before leaving the room. “Do you mind my

asking why you were so drunk when we found you?”

AN: Thank Lord Ravenclaw for this update, for some reason the ideas kept popping up when I was reading the latest chapter of 'Harry Potter and the Era of Hogwarts.' For those that don't know, The Maqui was the name of the French Resistance movement during World War II. Five points to the house of the person that can tell me where the poodle's quote came from.

This Thing of Yours

"Ever want to forget something so bad you don't care about the results?" Harry sighed, "I was thinking and I wanted to stop, In hind sight there were better ways to do that but I don't suppose that matters now."

"No I don't suppose it does," Schmitt nodded, "thank you Mr. Black."

"No problem," Harry tried opening his eyes and immediately regretted it as it felt like two hot irons were being thrust through his eye sockets into his skull. "I'll take a look at the book in a few minutes and give you my answer after that."

"All I ask is that you consider it," Schmitt replied closing the door.

"How do I get myself into these situations," Harry asked himself as he finally managed to sit up, "might as well start."

The first thing a wizard must learn if he is to become skilled at checking, removing, and em placing wards is how to activate their mage sight. First one must imagine magic gathering in the center of their body, then one must (for lack of a better term) push the magic up through their body and into their eyes. After that it is a simple matter of practice and in time a skilled practitioner will be able to call upon their mage sight almost without effort.

"Seems easy enough," Harry mused to himself as he began to gather the necessary focus, "and now I just argelmarther," he bit down on an agonizing scream. Perhaps it wasn't the best idea to increase the sensitivity of one's eyes when they felt like they had been used as the balls in a dozen games of Ping-Pong.

Harry spent several minutes writhing on the floor before he managed to regain enough of himself to read the next sentence.

Warning: DO NOT attempt to do this if you are suffering from a hangover. Doing so will cause intense pain, and WILL cause one or more of the following side effects. Blindness, Insanity, deafness,

neurosis, death. In rare cases, it can sometimes grant the victim an advanced form of mage sight.

Harry spent several more minutes cursing the authors of the book and their stupidity for placing such an important warning at the bottom of the page.

Checking himself out, Harry was pleased to discover that he could not find any sign that he was blind, insane, deaf, suffering from neurosis, or dead. Shrugging his shoulders at his good fortune, Harry was distracted by a knock at the door.

“Yes?”

“Got the things you requested Mr. Black,” another man wearing an odd striped uniform pushed a cart into the room, “I was also told to inform you that the wards that you are being asked to inspect are the Arachne type.”

“Thank you,” Harry nodded downing a handful of pain killer and antacids, “was there anything else you needed?”

“No Mr. Black.” The man in the odd uniform left, closing the door behind himself.

Turning back to the book on wards, Harry began to read.

Arachne type wards get their name from the fact that when viewed with mage sight, they appear to be a spider web emanating from a central key object. Like a spider web, these wards form complex patterns that must be mapped ahead of time. These maps will tell indicate the ward's intended purpose to a person skilled at placing wards and should be checked against the finished product to insure that the pattern was not changed when the ward was placed. Arachne type wards suffer from two major drawbacks. The first is that they are vulnerable to the destruction of their central key object, the second is that their range is limited to a radius of no more than a few kilometers from their center.

Taking a few minutes to flip through the rest of the book, Harry was startled by another knock at the door.

“Come in,” Harry looked up from his reading.

“Have you decided wither or not you were going to inspect our wards?” Schmitt asked with a raised eyebrow.

“I'd be happy to,” Harry agreed, “on the condition that you get anther person to check my results later.”

“That condition will not be a problem Mr. Black,” Schmitt agreed quickly, “I suppose that we should discuss payment before you begin.”

“If you like,” Harry shrugged.

“We will deposit a sum of twelve hundred ducats into the account of your choice for your work. Is that sum sufficient?”

“Yes,” Harry nodded wondering what a ducat was.

“Which bank would you prefer us to deposit your payment into?”

“Um . . .” Harry hesitated, not wanting to give the man his real name.

Seeing Harry's hesitation, Schmitt was quick to offer a solution. “If you like, we would be happy to arrange a new private account with the gnomes.”

“Sure,” Harry agreed quickly, “just give me the account information later.”

“Walk this way then,” Schmitt led Harry through several hallways until the two of them stood before a large statue. “We just need you to check the repairs that were made to the center of the wards around the key, they were damaged by the vandal along with Pieta and I would like to insure that the repairs were not tampered with.”

“Can I see the schematics?” Harry held out his hand for the map of the wards.

“Of course,” Schmitt agreed handing over the document.

Harry spent several minutes examining both the plan and the actual wards, "everything seems to be in order except . . ."

"Except what?" Schmitt asked nervously.

"The newer sections are a different color then the rest of the wards," Harry squinted at the plans, "the plans don't say anything about it one way or another but if I were you I would get them looked at."

"Thank you Mr. Black we will," agreed Schmitt, "would you like a tour of the grounds before you go?"

"I would," Harry smiled. "I can't wait to see some of the things that I heard were housed here."

Schmitt proved to be a very knowledgeable tour guide often providing bits of trivia to accompany his lectures about a piece's history and by the end of the tour Harry had a rather large grin on his face.

"It seems that we have reached the exit Mr. Black," Schmitt smiled, "do you have any more questions?"

"Just one," Harry nodded, "who was the second man in your story about the stone?"

"The second man?" Schmitt paused to think. "The man with great ability, he was the same man that designed my uniform."

"Thank you," Harry nodded politely, silently doubting the artistic ability of any man who would design a uniform like the one being worn by his new friend. "And good bye."

"Good bye Mr. Black."

With that, Harry stepped out to explore the streets of the Eternal City intent on seeing everything that Rome had to offer . . . for about five minutes, then he realized how tired he was from checking out the wards. Raising his hand to hail a cab, he decided to get a day or two of rest before setting out to see the city's sights.

Harry awoke late the next day and ate an early lunch in the hotel lobby, walking back to his room he decided to put off his exploration of the city in favor of resting another day.

Waking late the next morning, Harry decided that he had spent enough time laying around and pulled out his book to get instructions on how to enter Rome's magical districts.

One of the most accessible magical districts is the Via Veneficus, this district can be reached from nearly anywhere in Rome. To enter, one must find a three-way cross roads, after a few moments a fourth road will appear. Many of these entrances in the old city are also marked with a statue or image of Trivia, a three headed woman; one of a dog, one of a snake, and one of a horse.

Returning his guidebook to its section of his pack, Harry walked out of his hotel to find the nearest entrance. Which happened to be less than twenty meters from his hotel, shrugging his shoulders Harry entered Rome's magical section.

And ended up facing a shop named Curio's and Relics, unable to contain his curiosity Harry entered the shop.

"Good afternoon Sir, how may I help you?" The shopkeep looked up from behind the counter.

"I saw the sign and I was wondering what you sold here?" Harry looked around the dim space noting what appeared to be farming implements, oddly shaped trumpets and other items that he couldn't identify.

"I sell all kinds of different things," the shopkeep rummaged around behind the counter, "I do have one thing that I think will draw your interest."

"What's that?"

"A Pugio," the man pulled out an oddly shaped dagger. "It's an interesting little item that I picked up some time ago, it carry charms to remain ever sharp, ever new, and to remain unnoticed so long as it sits on your hip. I believe it would be a good thing for you to buy."

"How much?" Harry asked eyeing the odd looking dagger.

"I paid about fifty sestereius for it . . . so, I suppose I could sell it to you for say . . . two aureus?"

"Deal," Harry nodded handing over a few golden coins. "Have a nice day."

"You as well sir," the shop keeper nodded back.

Walking out of the store, Harry spent several minutes walking through through the market place until an odd conversation drew his attention.

"Did you hear about the British Minister?" A fishmonger commented to one of his customers, "says he's gonna explain why his government hasn't done anything about that dark lord. Wants ta drop a few excuses as ta why they shouldn't throw him out."

"I doubt he has anything to say, but it might be interesting to hear it." The customer replied, "it's too bad I don't have time to go home and turn on the Wireless."

"You don't have ta go home," the fishmonger waved off his customer's objections, "just go into one of the bars around here. Most of them will be playing the speech."

Harry nodded to himself, that seemed like a good idea walking towards the nearest drinking establishment he took one look around and walked in.

Glancing around the darkened smoke filled room, Harry walked towards the nearest empty seat.

"Mind if I sit here?" Harry asked gesturing to an empty seat next to an old man. "I'd like to hear what Fudge has to say."

"If you like," the old man gave a slight nod.

The two of them listened for a few moments as the voice of the Wizard Wireless reported Fudge's announcement the only reason that the forces of the Ministry had not yet triumphed was because

organized crime had joined the cause of, 'he who must not be named.' Causing his ranks to swell and forcing the Ministry's forces to suffer a temporary setback.

"What do you think of the English Minister's announcement, Mr.?"

"Black, I think the man's an idiot." Harry shook his head not noticing the shocked look on the old man's face, as he signaled the bartender to bring him a drink. "From what I understand, the people that control magical organized crime are much too intelligent to join the Dark Moron."

"What makes you say that?" The old man leaned forward in interest.

"The activity's of the Magical Syndicates tend to be nonviolent, their business is making money and killing people for no reason doesn't make a lot of money." Harry took a sip of his newly arrived drink, "what deaths do occur are usually criminals killing criminals."

"Why wouldn't they join the Dark Lord for the money and Power he could offer?"

"As I said before, most of the deaths that occur are criminals killing criminals. Law Enforcement doesn't tend to worry about that sort of thing, if they were to start bothering innocent people." Harry's voice became cold, "then I suspect that the kid gloves would come off and it would be a blood bath. If they want to join a war then they will have to be prepared to accept all that war entails."

"I see," the old man nodded. "Thank you for your advice Mr. Black."

"Happy to give it," Harry's cheerful mood returned. "Now if you'll excuse me, I really only came in here to hear Fudge's announcement and since it's over . . ."

"Of course," the old man nodded. "I realize that you must be a very busy man, and as thanks for your advice please allow me to pay for your drink."

"Thank you," Harry nodded, "and do have a good day."

The old man waited until his guest had left the bar before turning to the man next to him. "Call the other heads together, we need to have a meeting."

"What do you want us to do about the guy that just talked to you?"

"You will do nothing," the old man replied quickly.

"But sir," the thug protested. "He insulted you."

"He did no such thing," the old man took a sip from his glass, "in his eyes he was showing mercy and restraint. And I have no wish to see what happens if we don't take his warning to heart."

"What do you mean sir?"

"Didn't you hear his name?" The old man glanced over, "Mr. Black is one of the most dangerous men in Europe and if he works for the kind of people that I suspect, then even if you managed to kill him . . ." The old man shuddered.

"But sir," the thug was still a bit confused. "Why are you taking things so seriously?"

"Because I listened to what he had to say," the old man sighed. "As I said, in his eyes he was showing mercy. He took the time to come in here and inform me of the new rules that he expects us to follow, don't join the Dark Lord and don't kill anybody outside the family's. He calmly told us what would happen if we did not follow his rules, he could have just wiped us out and started over with whoever took our place."

"He's really that powerful Sir?" The thug was beginning to feel sick as he considered the fact that he had volunteered to go after Mr. Black, to 'teach him a lesson.'

"He walked into this bar, sat next to me, and told me how things were going to be." The old man grinned, "nobody would do something like that unless they had the power to back it up."

Outside, several members of the team assigned to watch one of the most powerful men in Italy's underworld were frozen in shock.

"Tony, you and Agatha follow Black. Antonio, you go report this." The team leader licked his lips, "I . . . I'll watch the bar."

Pandemonium erupted at the headquarters of the Praetorian guard when a wide eyed officer arrived and immediately ran to their superior's office.

"Sir," Antonio banged on the door to the Praefectus pratorio, "sir you have to hear this."

"Come in," a stern grey haired man with a military bearing opened the door, "and this had better be good."

"Sir, Mr. Black is in Rome," the breathless officer rushed out.

"And why did this cause you to go banging on the door of my office like that?" The Praefectus pratorio asked with false calm.

"Because he walked into Alberto Nachelli's bar and told him that if he didn't obey a few rules, then there would be a blood bath."

"What did Nachelli do?"

"He thanked Mr. Black for the advice and called a meeting of the family's," Antonio's hands were shaking. "He also told one of his subordinates that they were going to follow Black's orders, said that even if they managed to off black, that they would still have to deal with the people he works for."

"Good work, sit down and have something to drink." The Praefectus pratorio stuck his head out of his office, "get a dozen men to back up the group watching Nachelli's bar and call in all off duty officers."

"Yes Sir," several voices replied as the men rushed to follow their commander's instructions.

"Now," The Praefectus pratorio closed the door of his office and looked at his man. "Tell me everything that happened."

"Yes sir, Black walked in to the bar and sat next to Nachelli. They listened to Fudge's speech for a little while and Black said that Fudge was an idiot when it got to the part where Fudge said that the Mafia had joined up with the Dark Lord." The man paused to catch his breath, "Black said that if that happened then there would be a blood bath, said that so long as the Mafia focused on making money and confined its killings to other members of the families then he would leave them alone."

"How did Nachelli react?"

"He thanked Black and paid for his drink," Antonio shook his head. "One of his men wanted to go after Black but Nachelli stopped him, said that Black was trying to show mercy by laying down the rules and that he could have just killed them all as an object lesson to the next group."

"Good work, get to the break room and take a few hours for yourself."

"Sir, if it's alright I'd rather go back to my post." Antonio licked his lips nervously, "the captain is still there and I'd rather not leave him alone."

"I understand," The Praefectus pratorio nodded. "Go."

"Thank you Sir," Antonio called out over his shoulder as he ran to the nearest apparation point.

"Sir," another man ran up. "I need to talk to you about something."

"Make it quick Folchini," The Praefectus pratorio growled. "We're in the middle of something here."

"I just spoke to Gunter Schmitt about the wards," Folchini was bursting with excitement. "The man they hired to check our work said that the colors were different between the old sections and the new sections."

"So?"

“So mage sight is normally in black and white.” Folchini replied quickly, “the ability to see color indicates that the man they hired did something unbelievably dangerous to get that ability.”

“Why is this so important?” The Praefectus pratorio rubbed his eyes, “I don't see why this couldn't wait until after we dealt with this latest crisis Black dropped into our laps. “

“Because,” Folchini smiled. “The name of the man they hired was Mr. Black.”

“Tell me everything.”

“They met with Black and he told them that he didn't know much about wards, so they pulled one of the books out of the archives and gave it to him to brush up.”

“Could be that he just wanted to get a peak at that book,” the Praefectus pratorio mused to himself. “Or it could be that by his standards he doesn't know much, continue.”

“He spent a few hours flipping through the book, and a few more checking the wards.” Folchini checked his notes, “then Schmitt took him on a tour of the grounds. Black left after that.”

“When was this?”

“Three days ago sir.”

“So we've had Black wandering around my city doing god knows what for two days,” the Praefectus pratorio forced himself to calm. “See if you can find out what he did, check the files to see if anything strange happened and report to me when I get back.”

AN: Thanks go to Chaos Babe for the opening line of this chapter. Thanks go to Finbar for giving me the idea for how the wards worked.

Can The Bad Guy Fly?

“Get the French and Dutch on the fire,” the Praefectus Pratori yelled as he entered the room. “Tell them I want to share some information about Black. Set it up as a conference call if you can.”

“Yes sir,” several voices called out as handfuls of floo were tossed into fireplaces. “We've got them sir.”

“Good,” the Praefectus Pratori sat and faced the two figures in the flames. “I need some information and I am willing to give information.”

“You said you had something to share about black?” Hooft Van De Staatstovenaars, Sanne Vermeer asked with a raised eyebrow.

“Yes I do,” the Praefectus Pratori agreed impatiently, “he's in my city and he's been running around doing god knows what for the last two days and I want to know what he's capable of.”

“It might be best for you to tell us what you know so that we can fill in the blanks for you,” a shadowed man replied from the French fireplace.”

“He was hired by the Swiss Guard to check some wards three days ago,” the Praefectus Pratori answered quickly. “And he made a comment about the new section being a different color then the older sections.”

“How is that possible,” the shadowed man bit out. “To gain that ability, we knew he was insane but this . . . please go on.”

“Then he spent two days doing god knows what,” the Praefectus Pratori forced himself to calm. “He popped up again in a bar belonging to one of the heads of the Mafia. He sat down next to the aforementioned head and calmly told him that if the Mafia did not follow a few rules, including not following dark lords and confining their killings to other members of the Mafia then they would all be killed and that Black would start over with the next group.”

"How did your 'head' take that?" Sanne Vermeer leaned forward to hear the answer.

"He thanked Black and paid for his drink," the Praefectus Pratori wiped his brow. "He then told his men that attacking Black would be suicide and called a meeting with the other heads."

The two other heads of Magical Law Enforcement took several seconds to process the new information.

"Would you mind telling me what you know about the man?" Their Italian colleague asked, "I don't mean to be rude but I need every second I can get."

"We're terribly sorry," the shadowed Frenchman apologized. "But every time we hear something new about the man it turns out to be more astounding than the last bit of information. Ms. Vermeer, I believe you had the honor of meeting him first."

"Yes I did," the woman agreed. "He came to Amsterdam and stopped a group of death eaters that say they were tracking Harry Potter." She ignored the other two's explanations of surprise, "one of my people later reported that Black had her remove a tracking spell, so it seems likely that Black transferred the spell from Potter to himself. After that he spotted every tail we assigned. Including the ones under invisibility, and according to reports coming from England he also managed to discover a new species of magical animal without the watchers noticing."

"Black came to Paris and also spotted every one of our tails," the Frenchman began. "He also seems to have some sort of undetectable charm or field that alerts him of any intrusion into his room. While he was here he allowed us to look into his medical history and aside from a rather long list of past injuries, we found something odd. Black has apparently subjected himself to some sort of process that makes his blood deadly to anyone but himself and our healers speculate that in addition to making him immune to nearly every toxic substance known to man, that it may have also boosted his natural healing ability. Black has also shown that he has at least some skill in wandless magic."

“Is that all?”

“I hesitate to add it,” the Frenchman paused. “But due to some of the knowledge he showed, many are starting to believe that Black may have been here with the resistance during the Second World War.”

“Thank you,” the Praefectus Pratori gave a rare smile, “I do have to ask why you didn't tell me that Black was coming in my direction though.”

“We didn't know,” the Frenchman shrugged his shoulders. “Black gave us the slip by taking a Portkey to Monte Carlo, it took us a minute to track the Portkey and another thirty five seconds for the locals to get on the scene, but they lost his trail because of the excitement resulting from a very large win.” The Frenchman turned away from the fire and began conversing with an unseen person, “I've just been informed by our colleague in Monte Carlo that the win that distracted his followers was from a bet placed by Mr. Black.” He licked his lips, “further investigation reveals that the table had been charmed by one of the other players, interviews with the croupier revealed that Mr. Black spent several moments staring at the table before placing his bet. Our colleague also says that this investigation was prompted by the size of the win and that the casino has chosen to honor the bet and send it along with a rather substantial reward for fingering the player.” The Frenchman turned away from the fire to converse with the unseen person again, “who confessed to being part of a much larger ring of cheaters.”

“Thank you,” the Praefectus Pratori shook his head, “I suppose it was too much to hope that we could keep an eye on him if he didn't want to be followed.”

The other two said their good byes and the head of the Praetorian guard wished once again that he had taken the retirement that had been offered the year before.

“Sir,” Folochini ran towards his commander, “you're not going to believe this.”

“What is it,” the Praefectus Pratori closed his eyes and waited for the worst.

"I think I know what Black was doing in the city," Folochini was ready to burst with excitement. "Two days ago Antony Consiglio died, apparently of natural causes. And several of his Lieutenants died on the way to pay their respects in what we thought was an accident."

"You're saying Black killed them?"

"It all came together when I heard about Black's conversation with the head of one of the families," Folochini was shaking in excitement. "Tony Consiglio would have never followed Black's rules, and it's likely his Lieutenants would have followed their boss's lead even after death."

"Sound's reasonable," the Praefectus Pratori nodded. "What do you suppose will happen when Consiglio's son figures this out?"

"So you're saying that you think this man killed my father?" A middle aged man wearing an expensive set of clothing asked with a raised eyebrow.

"It looks that way yes," another man in another set of expensive set of clothes agreed, "what do you want us to do?"

"Grab another man," the middle aged man replied. "Then the three of us are going to this Black fellow's hotel room and then we're going to show the world why they don't mess with the Consiglio family."

"I'll arrange it Mr. Consiglio," the second man agreed. "When do you want to do this?"

"As soon as possible," Giovanni Consiglio replied quickly.

"Then why don't we just use your driver?" The second man asked with a raised eyebrow, "he's big and knows how to keep his mouth shut."

"Call him, I don't want Black to spend any more time above ground then necessary," Consiglio finished with a cold sneer.

The driver was summoned and in less then an hour the three of them were standing in front of Harry's hotel room.

“Kick down the door, I wanna surprise this bastard.” Consiglio ordered coldly, “and when the time comes I wanna take this guy out myself.”

“You got it boss,” the driver agreed as he brought his massive foot crashing into the door.

“Black, I'm going rip out your heart you bastard.” Consiglio cried as he rushed into the room.

Harry looked up from his book at the man who had burst into his room. Dodging the man's first spell, Harry drew his wand and threw a few Reducto's at his mysterious attacker.

How could anyone be that fast, Consiglio cursed to himself as Black seemed to disappear and reappear out of the path of his curses. “Stand still and die you bastard.”

Diving for cover behind one of the couches in his room, Harry took a bit of time to think. “Accio crazy man.”

Consiglio screamed as he felt himself get thrown past his attacker and towards one of the windows that had been cracked in the early stages of the duel. Calling out a stereotypical “NOOOOOOOOOO,” as he flew through the window he barely had time to realise what a bad idea going after Mr. Black had been before his body hit the street below.

“Boss,” the second man called, rushing towards their target.

Turning towards the nearest threat and raising his wand, Harry's quick Reducto reduced the man's wand to splinters but did little to stop the charge and before Harry had a chance to mutter another quick spell he found himself encircled by the man's powerful arms as they attempted to squeeze the life out of his body.

As the edges of his vision began to go black, Harry attempted to break the man's grip and all seemed lost until one of his hands brushed against the polished bone handle of his new Pugio. Yanking the knife out of its scabbard, Harry plunged it into his attacker's stomach and brutally twisted it when the man's grip lessened enough

to grant him the freedom of movement to do so. His head then swiveled to regard the third man, the last man, standing in the door.

The driver stood frozen, too frightened to even scream as the blood covered figure turned its head to watch him. The two of them stood, staring at each other for untold minutes until the blood covered figure took its first step forward towards its next victim.

Giving a strangled cry, the driver turned and began running away hoping that speed and distance would be enough to save his life from the monster behind him. Passing the elevators in a dead sprint, he flung open the door to the stair well.

Harry slowly lowered his wand and dagger after the third man had left and took a slow look around the room, absentmindedly casting a few Reparo's to fix the broken furniture he sat down on the now undamaged couch and tried to figure out why these things always seemed to happen to him.

If there was one thing that the team assigned to watch Mr. Black was good at, it was surveillance. They had honed their skills through years of playing cat and mouse with the family and they had frantically called for backup when they noticed Giovanni Consiglio walk into Black's hotel along with two of his thugs.

A team of eight wizards arrived just in time to see a screaming man hit the street. Shoulders dropping and fearing the worst, they approached the body to get their first look at the man they had failed to save.

"That's Giovanni Consiglio," one of the surveillance team cried out in shock. "Look at his finger, he's wearing his father's ring."

"Then we might not be too late to help Black," the leader of the strike team replied quickly. "Alpha team up the stairs, Bravo in the elevators."

"Sir," the two teams called out as they entered the hotel at a dead run.

Alpha team bounded up the stairwell, freezing when they discovered another body at the bottom of a flight of stairs.

“Consiglio's driver,” another member of the surveillance team that was accompanying them identified the body. “Looks like he was thrown down the stair case.”

Pausing only long enough to ensure that the man was dead, they continued up the stairs to link up with the other team.

“On three,” the leader of the strike team whispered to his men after they had stacked on the ruined door, “one . . . two . . . THREE.”

The team rushed into the room and froze, at the scene that awaited them.

“Is there something that I can help you gentlemen with?” Harry asked the latest group of intruders calmly.

“Mr. Black?” The team leader asked slowly, his eyes refusing to move from the bloody corpse on the ground to his front.

“Yes?” Harry was having a hard time keeping himself from giggling, “what can I do for you?”

“Do you require any medical assistance?” The team leader asked nervously, “or any other kind of assistance?”

“No thank you,” Harry shook his head. “But I suppose that you want me to come to the station to talk with you.”

“I think that we might want that,” the team leader agreed, “is that alright with you?”

“Of course it is,” Harry nodded.

“Then would you mind lowering your weapons?” The team leader asked slowly, “they make my men a bit nervous.”

“Sorry about that,” Harry carefully wiped the blade clean his shirt sleeve then replaced in its scabbard and his wand in its holster. “With all the excitement it slipped my mind,” Harry suppressed another giggle.

"Would you mind stepping outside then?" The team leader motioned towards the door, "so that we can start collecting evidence."

"I don't mind that at all," Harry agreed. "Do you mind if I grab my things first."

"I . . ." the team leader hesitated and then took a close look at the expression on Mr. Black's face, "don't think that will be a problem."

"Thank you," Harry nodded. "Won't take but a minute."

"Angelo, take one man and go report this." The team leader whispered after Black had left the room.

"Yes sir," the man agreed. "Do you know who that is on the ground?"

"Salvatore Carillo," the team leader was again staring at the body. "He was until today regarded as being one of the most dangerous men in Italy, and the main suspect in the murder of my predecessor."

"That's Carillo?" Angelo asked wide eyed, "Black gutted him like a fish."

"I know that," the team leader fought to keep the impatience out of his voice. "Now go report this."

"Sir," Angelo took one more look at the body before disappearing with a pop. He reappeared outside the headquarters of the Praetorian Guard. Rushing into the building, he nearly ran into his commander.

"Did you get to Black in time Angelo?" The Praefectus Pratori asked the breathless man, "is Black still alive?"

"He's alive sir," Angelo nodded quickly. "And he doesn't have a scratch on 'im."

"So you arrived in time to protect him from Consiglio and his thugs?"

"No Sir," Angelo's shook his head. "We arrived in time to see Consiglio hit the street."

"Tell me everything," the Praefectus Pratori commanded.

"We got there just in time to see a screaming man hit the street," Angelo began. "Black threw Consiglio through a window and we arrived just in time to see the end of it, while going up the stairs to Black's room we came upon another body that was identified as being that of Consiglio's driver. And when we got to the room . . . when we got to the room . . ."

"What is it?"

"We found a man with his stomach ripped open, and Black calmly standing over it with a big grin on his face like he had just won a prize." Angelo took a couple of deep breaths, "I wasn't sure why he would be so happy about it until I asked the captain who the dead guy was."

"Who?" The Praefectus Pratori demanded.

"Salvatore Carillo"

AN: I was trying to work on Caer Azkaban, but I am suffering from a massive case of writers block. I figured a chapter of this would be better than a chapter of nothing. The poodle's quote is from a movie called "The Man Who Knew Too Little." Atrum according to the online Latin dictionary means something along the lines of dark, gloomy, black. Some of you know what it means that Harry was fighting off a giggle attack, for those of you that don't. It does not mean that Harry enjoyed what he did, Harry is not a sadist.

Ravenfur – Harry doesn't have any idea about most of what's going on. Things will start to change a bit soon.

DarkPhoenix011 – Go for it, I tried to email you but it got rejected. Just send me a link when you get your story done.

All I wanted was some Peace and Quiet

Decided to cut nine where it is and start ten, this is what I have so far. Don't think I'll be doing much more tonight.

"May I take a look at your knife sir?" The strike team leader asked politely.

"Of course," Harry nodded, handing it over handle first.

"This is a very interesting knife," the team leader commented, "would you mind giving me your statement?"

"Not at all," Harry replied starting to calm down a bit. "I was in my room and three men rushed in, I dueled the first a bit before he ended up going through the window. The second one grabbed me and I'm afraid that I had to cut him up, and the third one ran out the door."

"Thank you for your time sir," the team leader nodded closing his book. "We may have to ask you a few questions later to clarify a few things after forensics gets their report in."

"Not a problem," Harry waved it off. "Mind if we go down stairs? I feel that it may be time to check out of this hotel."

"Not at all sir," the leader nodded. "But I'm afraid that I'll have to accompany you until I get authorization to let you go."

"I understand," Harry gave a short nod. "You do what you have to do."

The two of them walked down the hall towards the elevators and past the body of the driver that had been brought up and placed beside the others.

"Shame he had to die," Harry mumbled to himself after he noticed the body of the driver, "I was going to let him go."

Any response that the team leader may have made was cut off by the arrival of another man, "message from the Pratori."

“What is it?” The team leader asked calmly.

“He says that Black is free to go if this looks like it was self defence,” what he had actually said was 'get him out of my city' but the messenger saw no need to annoy the wizard that had swatted Salvatore Carillo like a fly.

“I do,” the team leader gave a quick nod. “You're free to go Mr. Black, may I ask where you're going next?”

“Switzerland sounds nice,” Harry mused. “Wherever it is, I hope its quieter then my vacation's been so far.”

“Have a good day Mr. Black,” the team leader watched in awe as the most dangerous man he had ever met calmly walked out of the building.

Harry resisted the urge to scream as he walked towards the entrance to Magical Rome, why did these things keep happening to him? Was there some sort of curse on the Potter line that nobody had told him about?

Sighing in frustration, he entered the magical section of Rome and paused in front of the small bar that he had previously visited. He really needed a drink right now, after that he could find a way to get to Switzerland.

“Good evening Mr. Black,” the old man from before nodded and motioned towards an empty seat. “I trust that you're doing well?”

“I wish that were true,” Harry shrugged. “Unfortunately, I've had a rather bad day.”

“What happened?” The old man motioned for the bar tender to bring over a drink.

“I was attacked by three men in my hotel room,” Harry took a sip of the newly arrived drink. “And things got a little violent.”

“You weren't hurt were you?”

"No," Harry shook his head. "Not a scratch."

"I see," the old man licked his lips nervously. "What do you intend to do about the situation?"

"The way I see things, it's best to forget the whole situation ever happened." Harry finished his drink and stood up, "and hope that nothing like this ever happens again."

"I'm sure that it won't Mr. Black," the relief on the old man's face was plainly visible. "Have a good day Mr. Black."

"Thank you," Harry tossed a few coins on the table. "It's only polite to let me pay this time, after all you paid the last time."

"Good bye Mr. Black," the old man called out to Harry as he walked out the door. "And have a pleasant trip."

Harry spent several minutes walking around the alley before he found a small shop advertising that it had the cheapest international portkeys in Rome.

"Hello?" Harry called out as he entered the apparently deserted shop, "is anyone here?"

"What?" A head poked through a door way that presumably led to a back room. "Oh, I'm sorry. I didn't expect you to arrive for another few minutes. You'll be wanting a portkey then?"

"Yes," Harry confirmed, "to Switzerland."

"Then I'll need to see your Passport," the man held out his hand. "After all you'll be crossing a border."

"One moment," Harry dug around his pockets, and handed his papers over to the shop keeper.

The man pulled out his wand and tapped the passport.

"If that's what you need," Harry took back his passport his passport, "what did you mean when you said that you expected me . . ."

“Thank you, and here you are.” The man interrupted Harry and handed over Harry's passport along with a key chain bearing the Swiss flag.

“Thank you,” Harry accepted the two items. “How much do I owe you?”

“It has already been paid for by the Praefectus Pratori,” the man smiled. “He had his men go to every travel shop in Rome and tell them that any international portkey you bought would be at his expense, and that he would pay double the list price if we were able to get you out within the hour.”

“That was nice of him,” Harry smiled. “Now about that question I wanted to ask.”

“I'm afraid we won't have time for that Harry,” the man gave an apologetic smile. “You see, I really wanted to get paid double, and to do that you portkey will have to leave right about . . . now.”

Harry felt a pull behind his navel and the world began to spin.

“Welcome to Switzerland,” a jolly looking man said with a smile. “May I see your papers please?”

“Sure,” Harry handed over his passport and fought to wipe the look of annoyance off his face, damn shop keeper.

“I trust that you've had a good day Mr.” The customs agent glanced down at the passport, “. . . Black.”

“It's been a bit rough, but I have high hopes that things will quiet down.”

“I see,” the customs agent seemed to be unable to pull his eyes away from the small document. “

“Was there something you needed?” Harry asked getting a bit worried about the man's odd behavior.

"No Sir," the customs agent answered quietly, "I just didn't expect that I would ever meet you. Just check in with magical law enforcement while you're here. They've got a few messages that they'd like to pass along and I also believe that some of them would like to chat with you over a beer if you have time."

"Thank you," Harry nodded, "do you have any suggestions on where I might find a good place to stay?"

"There is an information desk right outside," the customs agent motioned towards the door. "If you don't have anything else that you'd like to ask me."

"Have a good day," Harry nodded and walked towards the exit.

"You as well Mr. Black," the customs agent closed his line and waited until Mr. Black had walked through the exit, then he quickly walked towards his supervisor. "Mr. Black was just in my line."

"Did you tell him to get in contact with the Polizei?"

"Yes," the agent nodded. "He asked if there was anywhere that we wanted him to stay and I pointed him towards the information desk."

"Good job," the supervisor noted the time in his note book. "Out of curiosity I have to ask, what was his first name?"

"Mr." The customs agent shrugged. "When I looked, that was the only thing in the section."

"I see," the supervisor spent a few minutes thinking. "Go wait in the break room, I've got to go report this."

"We've found out what happened to Mr. Black sir," the thug that had earlier offered to 'teach Mr. Black a lesson' told his boss, Alberto Nachelli nervously.

"Well?"

“Black was attacked by Giovanni Consiglio, Salvatore Carillo, and Consiglio's driver in his hotel room. Black Tossed Consiglio through a window, spilled Carillo's guts on the floor, and pushed the driver down a staircase.” The man hesitated.

“Go on.”

“The rest of this comes from my cousin Tony, the one who works in that bar the cops like ta go to.” On seeing his boss's nod, the man continued. “They're saying that Black killed old man Consiglio and that he also staged the accident that wiped out Consiglio's men. One of them even swears that Black muttered something about how he was going to let Giovanni live and that it was a shame that he didn't get the hint and leave things alone. They also think that he was sitting in his hotel room, out in the open to see if anyone decided to come after him.

“Thank you,” Alberto Nachelli nodded. “And remind me to thank your cousin for the information, it helped bring things into focus.”

“How sir?”

“Black said something when he paid for my drink,” the old man leaned back in his chair. “He said that he wasn't going to retaliate and that it was only fair that it 'was only fair that he paid for this one, since we paid for the last one.' I thought that he was talking about the drinks, but now I'm not so sure.”

“What do you mean boss?”

“It now looks like something happened to bring us to Black's attention, so he killed Consiglio and several of his men and set out some new rules to make us pay for annoying him.” The old man smiled, “for some reason he let Consiglio's son live, so when Consiglio's son tried to kill him, Black decided that it was his mistake and not ours.”

“So when Black said that he would pay for this one?”

“He was talking about the attempt to kill him, and not the drinks.”

“What is it?” The Praefectus Pratori called out answering the knock on his door.

“Black's gone Sir,” a man stuck his head in, “went to Switzerland.”

“Thank you,” the Praefectus Pratori's face broke into a grin. “With any luck he won't come back till after I'm retired.”

“Yes sir,” the man chuckled as he left the office.

“What was it you were going to say before we were interrupted?” The Praefectus Pratori turned back to the team leader that had been sent to help Black.

“I was going to tell you about Black's knife sir,” the man paused. “It was very unusual and I thought that it would be best to tell you about it.”

“Well?”

“It was a Roman style Pugio with a bone handle, the enchantments were rather old and done in the same way that the Romans commonly used, which leads me to believe that it's not a replica. The blade was made out of an odd bluish metal and it had a word inscribed on it.”

“What word?”

“Atrum,” the team leader swallowed nervously. “Which can be translated to Black according to what I remember from my Latin classes.”

“You're not suggesting?”

“I'm not suggesting anything sir, I'm just reporting the facts as I have them.”

As Harry walked the information desk with a plan began to form on how to spend his first day in Switzerland. He was going to get five

pounds of Swiss chocolate, a large hotel room, and then he was going to let fate decide what happened next.

“Good evening sir,” the girl at the information desk smiled when she noticed him approach. “What can I do for you today?”

“I need a room,” Harry smiled. “Preferably as large and luxurious as possible.”

“One moment sir,” the girl ducked behind her counter and came out with a pamphlet. “Here you are, large luxurious, and in a convenient location as well.”

“Thank you.” Harry turned and walked away, happy that things were beginning to look up.

Behind him, the girl at the information desk smirked. She didn't know who had paid her to put a tracking spell on the pamphlet that she had given to the odd man, and she didn't care. After all, she couldn't live her meager salary without . . . supplementing her income. She wouldn't have cared even if she had known of the source of the money, the amount they were offering to anyone that gave them a way to track the man with the unrecognisable face was just too high to pass up. Even if it did mean getting her hands a little dirty.

“I have some good news my Lord,” said a man as he bent to kiss the robes of his disfigured master. “A free lancer in Switzerland has managed to plant a tracking charm on Black, and we can track him so long as he has it in his possession.”

“Excellent,” the dark figure hissed. “Send fifteen men to . . . make an example of him, the world needs to learn that the price of defying me.”

“It shall be done my Lord,” the pathetic man groveled and began to back out of the room.

“Would you prefer a room on one of the upper levels or on one of the lower levels sir?” The hotel receptionist asked Harry with a professional smile.

"I'd like a room as high as possible," Harry smiled. "With a balcony if you have it, I like to feel the wind in my hair."

"Of course sir, room 1003 on the tenth floor is available and I am happy to tell you that it has a rather large balcony." The clerk reached under the counter and pulled out a key. "Is there anything else we can do for you that would make your stay more pleasant?"

"If it wouldn't be too much trouble, would you mind sending some chocolate up to my room?" Harry asked sheepishly, "I've heard so much about it and I'm afraid that I never had a chance to try it before now."

"I'll have some sent up, and with luck it will arrive at your room about the same time you do." The clerk replied with a grin, "you would be surprised at how many people make that same request when they check in."

"Thank you," Harry smiled taking his room key. "And have a good night."

"You as well Mr. Black," the clerk replied cheerfully.

Walking quickly towards one of the elevators, Harry had to resist the urge to shout in joy. He was finally starting the nice quiet vacation that he had planned on, from now on there would be no; death eater attacks, muggers with knives, Swiss Guardsmen asking him to check wards, crazy men bursting into his hotel room, or anything but peace and quiet.

"Tenth floor," Harry instructed the elevator operator.

"Yes sir."

Harry was bouncing with excitement by the time the elevator doors opened, "thank you and have a nice day." He called over his shoulder to the elevator operator as he rushed towards his room.

"Your chocolate sir," said a smiling young woman with a large tray from beside Harry's door, "would you like anything else?"

“No thank you,” Harry shook his head. “Just put the chocolate on the bed and tell me what I owe you.”

“Compliments of the management sir,” the girl placed the tray on the bed. “We try to keep the customers in the luxury rooms happy.”

“Thank you,” Harry nodded handing over a small roll of folded bills. “And have a good night.”

“You as well sir,” the girl gave one last smile and left the room.

Grabbing a piece of chocolate, Harry opened the door to the balcony and leaned on the rail. The wind in his hair, the lights of the city, could his life get anymore perfect.

“Diaieeeeeeeeeee.”

Harry watched in shock as several death eaters appeared in front of him and then plummeted to their deaths. After taking a suspicious sniff of the piece of chocolate that he had been eating, Harry leaned over the rail to look at the pile of broken death eaters littering the ground in front of the hotel. Wondering why these things always happened to him and resisting the urge to cry Harry turned around and walked sadly back into his hotel room, local law enforcement would be showing up soon and it might be a good idea to pack.

AN: For those who don't know, 'The Gnomes of Zurich' is a common term for Swiss bankers. That's why the Swiss Guard called them the Gnomes in an earlier chapter, and it's also why the bank may be run by Gnomes in a future part. Well, I just noticed that deleted my scene breaks, so here it is again. Sorry about that.

Fangalla Marie – Arg, I'm an idiot. Thanks it's been changed.

Splat

"Quiet night," one of the watchers commented to his partner. "You think that anything will happen."

"Nah, everybody is well aware of our neutrality, there is no way that . . ." he trailed off and the two of them stared blankly at the pile of dead men in black robes that had appeared in front of them. "I suspect that now would be a good time to call for backup."

"I suspect it would," the other agreed. "Do you think that Black would refrain from killing anybody else if we asked him nicely?"

"Can't tell a fish to stop swimming," the other shrugged. "Do you want to go back to headquarters or go up and interview Black?"

"Flip for it?"

"Sure," the man pulled a coin out of his pocket. "Call it in the air."

"Heads," the two men looked down at the coin. "Have fun with Black."

"Have fun with your report," he replied as his partner disappeared. "Why couldn't he have waited until next shift and saddled them with the paperwork?" The man shook his head

Walking slowly towards the hotel, the man racked his brain trying to think of a way that all this could be reported in such a way that nobody would demand the arrest of Mr. Black.

"Did you see that?" The shocked hotel clerk was staring out the window towards the pile of dead death eaters. "They just fell from the sky."

"Yes they did," the man agreed. "I'm a cop, don't go outside and don't leave. We'll have someone along to take your statement soon."

"O Ok," the clerk agreed.

"What room is Mr. Black in?"

"One moment," the shaken hotel clerk checked his records. "Room 1003."

"Thank you," the officer got in one of the elevators. "Tenth floor."

The ride up to the tenth floor passed in silence and after the doors opened, the Swiss cop walked to the door to Harry's room and knocked.

"I've been expecting you," Harry greeted the man as he opened the door. "Would you like to come in or would you like me to come with you?"

"Hello Mr. Black, my name is Willelmus Petersen, why don't you tell me what happened on our way to the lobby?" The Swiss cop suggested after taking a quick look around the room. "One way or another, I'm sure that you're planning to switch hotels anyway."

"Ok," Harry agreed shouldering his pack. "It was the strangest thing, I was standing on my balcony eating a piece of chocolate and out of nowhere a group of death eaters appeared."

"Then mysteriously fell to their deaths?" Petersen asked with a raised eyebrow.

"It was the strangest thing," Harry agreed, "I don't even know how they were able to find me."

"Why would death eaters be looking for you Mr. Black?"

"They're always trying to kill me," Harry shrugged. "I just assumed that I was the target."

"I see," Petersen nodded happily, "that sounds like it should work. A car will arrive soon to give you a ride to a new hotel, we'll contact you again after we've had a chance to wipe this out of the hotel staff's memories."

"Ok," Harry shook his head. "All I wanted to do in Switzerland was to eat some chocolate and get a new watch, was that too much to ask for?"

"I don't believe it was Mr. Black, but one can't tell the death eaters to stop attacking when one wants."

"I know," Harry clenched his hands in silent frustration. "But I'm supposed to be on vacation and so far I haven't had a moments rest."

"Looks like your car's here Mr. Black," Petersen pointed to a car parked in front of the hotel.

"Thanks," Harry shook the man's hand. "And have a nice night."

"You as well Mr. Black," Petersen replied, then watched Harry enter the car and drive off.

"Well?" Another man walked up. "What was his story?"

"He said that he had nothing to do with the pile of dead people," Petersen smirked. "To hear him tell it, they just appeared and fell to their deaths without any assistance."

"Story check out?"

"It did," Petersen chuckled. "I looked around the room and the only magical traces that I could detect was a homing spell on a pamphlet."

"Nothing else?"

"Nope," Petersen grinned. "When the French said that he could put up wards without being detected, I was a bit sceptical, but after tonight."

"Explains why they hired him to take a look at the new wards down in Italy."

"Sure does," Petersen agreed. "Why don't we see if we can trace the pamphlet and see if we can pick up whoever tried to plant it on Black before he finds them and arranges another . . . accident."

The two men went up to Harry's former hotel room and took a look around, "I don't believe it?" The second man called out in shock. "The pamphlet has a little stamp on the back telling where it comes from."

"Let me have a look at that," Petersen squinted at the stamp on the back of the pamphlet. "I know where he got this, we move in three, two, one."

The two men reappeared in front of a very familiar information counter. "Can I help you gentlemen?" The attendant asked nervously.

"I'm only gonna ask this once," Petersen growled. "Did you give a pamphlet with a homing charm on it to a man today?"

"I have no idea what you mean," the girl replied innocently. "Why do you ask?"

"Ok, if you don't know anything then I guess the two of us will be going." Petersen shrugged, "and I ask because a small pamphlet with a homing spell allowed a large group of death eaters to arrive from England to attack a man."

"How terrible," the girl shook her head. "But I still don't understand why you suspected that I might have something to do with this."

"Well after Mr. Black, that was their target's name killed them, my partner and I thought that his next target would be the person that gave him the pamphlet." Petersen shrugged, "and the two of us wanted to get a good look at them so that when the time came we would be able to identify the body."

"Not that it would help to get a look," the other man added. "I've heard that he likes to get messy sometimes and after seeing what he did to those death eaters . . ."

"You're bluffing," the girl began to sweat nervously. "And even if you weren't, I haven't done anything illegal."

"Such a shame that is," Petersen shook his head in mock sympathy. "I've heard that a nice safe prison cell is the best place to be if Black's after you and even if he isn't there's still the death eaters to consider. What do you think they will do when they find the person that led them into an ambush, but between the two of us Black's the one I'd be worried about."

The girl paused to think about things and shuddered at the images that her mind conjured up, "I'll talk, I'll give you my list of contacts, I'll confess to everything I've ever done. Just keep them away from me."

"I thought you said you didn't know anything?" Petersen asked innocently, "and that you didn't do anything wrong."

"Don't play with me," the girl retorted angrily. "This is my life we're talking about."

"I'd find it a lot easier to be sympathetic if you hadn't set a man up to be murdered." Petersen replied coldly, "that sort of thing annoys me. I suggest that you accompany us down to the station and I suggest that you don't even think about trying to lie to me."

"Ok," the girl deflated. "I already said that I'd tell you everything, just keep me safe."

"Touch this," Petersen pulled a button off of his shirt. "It's a portkey that will take us to HQ."

The woman complied and the three of them disappeared.

"Chief wants to speak with you Petersen," one of the officers looked up from his desk to address the new arrivals. "Who's your prisoner?"

"She helped set up the hit on Black," Petersen replied.

"And she's still alive?" The man looked at the prisoner with undisguised curiosity. "I'll take charge of her, you go talk to the chief."

"Put her in one of the singles when you're done with her," Petersen nodded. "And put up a suicide watch, I don't think Black will kill her after I said that we'd protect her but I'd also think that it would be best to be careful."

"Got it"

Petersen walked across the room to the office belonging to the Head of Magical Law Enforcement and Chocolate Inspection and gave a polite knock on the door, "you wanted to see me?"

"Come in and close the door behind you," the chief looked up from his desk. "Looks like we might have to arrest Black over what happened with the Death Eaters."

"Why?" Petersen stared at his boss in shock, "they tried to kill him and he defended himself. It's an open and shut case."

"I agree," the chief nodded. "But the British Minister has been complaining that we're letting the man who murdered several British citizens walk free, and he demands that we at least have a trial."

"We do that and the Judge would laugh us out of court," Petersen shook his head. "There isn't a shred of evidence that we could use against Mr. Black."

"What do you mean?" The chief leaned forward with growing interest.

"Black set everything up to look like an accident," Petersen smiled. "All I can tell from the evidence is that a group of death eaters forgot to check the location before they ported in, nothing directly points at Black doing anything."

"Then what makes you think that it wasn't an accident?"

Petersen glared at his boss, "I've been investigating murders since before you started your first year of school, and I've never seen something like this."

"I'm not saying that you're wrong," the chief held up his hand. "I've already decided to tell the Brits that it was all a big accident and that a large group of men, some of whom large contributors to the reelect Fudge campaign. Had the bad taste to try pretending to be death eaters as some sort of prank because we know that men as influential and rich as they were would never support the Dark Thingy, all died in a tragic accident that Mr. Black had nothing to do with. I just want to know where Black slipped up."

"He didn't," Petersen replied with a laugh. "Sorry about criticizing you Hans but I thought that all this time in the office might have turned you dumb, Black asked for a room on one of the top floors with a balcony and just happened to be standing on it when they ported in."

We know from the French that he can put up undetectable wards, and I suspect that he warded his hotel room and then walked out onto the balcony to watch the fun.”

“Anything else,” the chief grinned.

“He was eating chocolates to pass the time waiting for them to appear and he's thrown people off of buildings in the past,” Petersen shrugged. “There is no way that the sequence of events leading up to this could be random.”

“Thanks Willi,” the chief chuckled, “and thank Black for making things so easy if you get a chance. I've got to call the British and tell them about this tragic accident.”

“Have fun with that Hans,” Petersen chuckled. “And why don't you meet up with the rest of us for a few drinks if that idiot Fudge doesn't take too much of your time.”

“I'll try Willi,” the chief nodded. “And don't look so smug, it's your fault I have this damn job.”

“Not my fault that I was smart enough to turn it down and you weren't.”

Scene Break>

Harry awoke late the next morning and stretched. Walking to the balcony of his new room, he looked over the edge to insure that a new group of death eaters hadn't ported in and fallen to their deaths while he was sleeping Harry smiled when he saw clean pavement without any blood stains.

Dressing quickly and shouldering his pack, he left his room and went downstairs for breakfast, “good morning Mr. Black.” A man greeted him as he stepped off the elevator.

“Good morning Mr. Petersen,” Harry nodded to the Swiss Law Enforcement Officer. “Do you need me to answer any questions for your report?”

“No,” Petersen shook his head. “All the evidence points to it simply being a tragic accident that you had no control over and as such all we need is the quick statement you gave last night.”

“Thank you”

“No thank you Mr. Black,” Petersen smiled. “I came here to do a favor for some of my countrymen in Italy, they wanted me to take you to meet the gnomes so that they could brief you on your new account.”

“That was nice of them,” Harry smiled. “Lead the way.”

“Would you prefer a magical or non magical form of transportation?”

“Non,” Harry smiled. “After seeing that accident last night, I'd rather take it safe for a few days.”

“I'll call a car,” Petersen nodded raised his hand to call the car. “How are you enjoying your trip to Switzerland?”

“From what I've seen it's a nice country,” Harry shrugged. “After this I guess I'll get a new watch and head to Germany.”

“Leaving so soon?” Petersen asked as they entered the car.

“No offence, but I'd rather not stay around after witnessing what happened last night.” Harry resisted the urge to frown, after the appearance of the death eaters the Order was sure to follow. “I just want a quiet vacation and Switzerland is getting a bit too exciting.”

“I understand,” Petersen resisted the urge to laugh, Black had a great sense of humor. “Where are you planning to go next?”

“Germany,” Harry smiled, “after that . . . who knows.”

“I hear that Berlin is nice this time of year,” Petersen remarked. “And Munich is also suppose to be a good place to see.”

"Thanks," Harry nodded. "I don't have any plans yet, but it's nice to get ideas."

"Glad I could be of help," Petersen looked around as the car stopped. "It looks like we've arrived."

The two of them exited the car and Petersen led Harry through an impressive set of doors, past the main floor and to a door marked private. "Just go in and tell them who you are," Petersen nodded towards the door. "I've got to get back to work, have a nice day Mr. Black."

"You as well," Harry nodded back, and knocked on the door."

"Yes?" A short man with a large pair of glasses answered the door.

"My name is Mr. Black," Harry looked down at the man. "And I was told that I was suppose to have a meeting with the Gnomes?"

"Right this way," the man replied briskly and opened the door wider to allow Harry to enter.

"I don't want to sound foolish," Harry began. "But why is a bank being run by gnomes and not goblins?"

"It's not being run by Gnomes Mr. Black," the man replied evenly. "That's just a nickname used by some of the more ignorant members of society for the bankers here, as for why this bank is run by humans and not goblins." The man paused, "we've never been forced to allow a monopoly to stop a war."

"Oh," Harry thought about things for a few minutes. "Thank you for the information, and sorry about calling you a gnome."

"That's quite alright Mr. Black," the small man replied with a bit of warmth. "So long as it wasn't a deliberate insult, I see no reason to take offence."

"So how does the bank here work?" Harry asked curiously.

"The same as a non magical bank would," the small man replied. "We are currently in the magical section, you entered through the non-magical section. We see no reason to limit our customer base and our accounts can be accessed by both magical and non-magical methods."

"That's useful," Harry nodded. "What are we going to discuss in our meeting?"

"It might be best to wait until we reach the privacy of my office before we talk about that," the small man replied. "I do not mean to say that the bank is unsafe but . . ."

"It's best not to take chances," Harry agreed. "I understand, it's a sensible policy."

"I'm glad you think so," the small man nodded opening a door. "After you."

"Thank you," Harry nodded walking into the room and taking a seat.

"First let's get your account balance," the man pulled a small piece of paper out of his desk. "It will display your current balance broken down into subsections of how much of what type of currency with a total in CHF at the end."

"CHF?"

"Confederation Helvetica Franc," the banker smiled. "After that I have a small message that I'm to relay to you from several casino's in Monte Carlo."

"Thank you," Harry replied taking the paper. "Is this correct?"

"Down to the last decimal point," the banker nodded. "The Casinos wish to thank you for your efforts on their behalf and the trust you showed by not immediately accepting your winning, and as a small gesture of appreciation they have awarded you a small percentage of stock."

"How much?"

"About one fifth of one percent of all the casinos in Monte Carlo," the banker shrugged. "It's not much, but it does provide a small income." The banker carefully avoided mentioning that the deal would benefit the casinos immensely, after all who would try to cheat a place that they knew was partially owned by the infamous Mr. Black.

"Anything else?" Harry asked quietly, still stunned by the amount of money in his new account.

"Not unless you have some questions for me Mr. Black," the banker shook his head.

"Not right now," Harry blinked and looked at the figure written on the piece of paper again. "I guess I'll be going then."

"I'll show you to the door," the banker smiled. "It has been a pleasure doing business with you Mr. Black."

"The pleasure was all mine," Harry smiled. "Thank you for taking the time to see me."

"This way Mr. Black," the banker led Harry through an array of hallways before reaching an exit. "This is one of the more discreet exits into one of the magical sections of town."

"Thank you," Harry nodded stepping onto the street. "And have a nice day."

"You as well Mr. Black," the banker closed the door.

Walking down the street, Harry glanced at the window displays in front of the shops and stopped in front of one containing an array of timepieces. Entering the store, Harry looked around and found a man with a strange device on his head stooped over a small table.

"I'll be with you in a moment," the man didn't look up. "I just want to get this last piece in before I stand up."

"Take your time," Harry nodded. "I'm not in any hurry."

The man spent several seconds tinkering with something on the table and then stood, removing the strange device on his head. "Sorry about that, I was in the middle of something delicate and I couldn't stop in the middle of it."

"No problem," Harry nodded. "I've come here because I noticed your display and I'd like to take a look at the most durable watch you have."

"Know what you want huh?" The man smiled and grabbed a solid gold jewel encrusted watch out of the display cabinet, "this one is as accurate as we can make it, the button on the side here will change it from local time to Greenwich mean time to any number of times that you select, it's also indestructible."

"Sounds like just what I had in mind, only." Harry paused, "do you have something like it that isn't so gaudy?"

"Of course," the man nodded replacing the watch in its display and pulling out another watch, "this watch has the same characteristics but it is a bit less . . . gaudy."

"I'll take it," Harry smiled purchasing the watch and putting the plain silver object on his wrist. "Do you know where I could arrange transportation to Berlin?"

"Store up the street and to your right," the man nodded. "Called 'Adventure Travel,' you can't miss it."

"Thank you," Harry left the store and entered 'Adventure Travel.'

"What can I do for you?" The woman in the shop looked up from her desk.

"Portkey to Berlin if you have one ready," Harry replied absently as he examined one of the pictures on the wall of the travel agency.

"One moment," the woman opened a cabinet and removed a small circular object. "Anything else?"

"No that will be all"

“Then that will be twenty five francs,” the woman replied. “The word to activate your portkey is Berlin, have a good day.”

“You too,” Harry nodded. “Berlin.”

AN: The ticket agent knew that he was Harry Potter and he changed the first name to 'Mr.' when he tapped the passport.

The Wall

“Good afternoon sir,” a smiling customs agent greeted Harry upon his appearance, “how did you like the weather in Switzerland?”

“It was ok,” Harry shrugged digging for his passport. “How's the weather in Germany?”

“It's good sir,” the customs agent nodded. “Very nice at the moment, what is the purpose of your visit?”

“I'm on vacation,” Harry handed the man his passport. “I want to get a look at some of the museums and monuments, and I want to sample some of your famous beers.”

“Everything seems to be in order Mr. Black,” the customs agent stamped the passport and handed it back. “I hope you have a nice quiet time in Germany.”

“So do I,” Harry smiled. “And thank you.”

Harry walked out and hailed a cab, unaware as always of the panicking Law Enforcement officers that he left in his wake.

There was a sense of excitement in the air and half the buildings of the city seemed to be under construction or renovation. Harry smiled as he wandered through the city, marveling at the surprisingly large number of buildings that still carried battle scars from the last war.

Harry spent the entire day gazing at the wonders of Berlin until he finally wandered into a posh looking hotel with a smile on his tired face, it had been a great day and he was finally leaving all the strangeness behind.

“May I help you sir?” A girl asked from behind the check in counter.

“I'd like a room if you have one to spare.” Harry nodded, “the most comfortable one you have available.”

“Yes sir.” The girl pulled a key off the rack, “I’m putting you in room four oh six, will you be requiring anything else?”

“No thank you,” Harry took the key, “thank you.”

“Thank you sir.”

Harry went up to his room with a smile and tossed his pack on the bed. Walking over to the windows he threw open the curtains and paused, maybe it would be best to leave them closed. While it wouldn't stop people from appearing outside and then falling to their doom, closing the drapes would make it easier to pretend that he didn't notice anything.

Harry woke up late the next day and, after checking his notes realised that he was supposed to meet with the Professor and Henchgirl later in the day.

Walking down to the hotel lobby, Harry stopped at a small information kiosk to get a bit of information on Berlin.

“May I help you sir?”

“I’ve got a few hours to kill,” Harry smiled, “and I was wondering if you had any suggestions on places to visit?”

“The Alliierten Museum is always popular,” the girl behind the hotel's information counter smiled and began pulling out pamphlets. “There are also a few other places that shouldn't be missed.”

“Thank you,” Harry nodded taking the informative pieces of paper. “And have a nice day.”

Harry pulse quickened as he read the description of the Alliierten Museum, he had come to Berlin with the express purpose of looking into the history of the Soviet occupation and now he had his chance. His interest in the wall was because it represented one of his very few happy childhood memories.

Harry had been young when the wall collapsed, but he still remembered the look of elation worn by the reporter that broke the

story. A look that told the world that evil had been forced back if only for a while, a look that spoke of all being right in the world. His uncle had just stared at the television in shock, not believing what the reporter had just said. Unfortunately, Vernon had then noticed that the 'worthless boy' was watching television and then things had gotten a bit less pleasant. Despite that, watching as crowds of people tore down the scar running across Berlin was still one of the happiest moments of his life.

Harry froze after taking his first step into the museum, the air around him was buzzing with magic and his head whipped back and forth to find its source.

"May I . . ." the greeter paused, "you'll be wanting to go into the door to your front. "Have a nice day."

"O . . . k," Harry nodded fingering his concealed wand. "I'll just be going in then."

"You do that," the greeter agreed.

Harry approached the door slowly, his instincts screaming at him to turn and run and his curiosity urging him to go forward. Slowly, carefully he reached towards the knob with his left hand and turned it. Easing the door back, Harry quickly stepped in and to the left.

"Hello?" An older woman looked up from her magazine, "are you here for the tour?"

"Yes?" Harry shrugged, "I guess so."

"One moment then," the woman stowed her magazine and pulled out a clipboard. "Sorry about that, I get so few visitors that I wasn't expecting you."

"That's alright," Harry nodded and allowed his muscles to relax. "What's the first thing on the tour?"

"The first thing on the tour is," the woman glanced down at her clipboard. "A section of the wall that still has the original wards intact."

"I wasn't aware that there were any wards," Harry blinked in surprise.

"Not many know people know that some of the wards were preserved sir," the woman nodded misunderstanding Harry's statement. "But we managed to stabilise the wards on our section before they unraveled."

"Oh," Harry shrugged, "do you have a diagram available?"

"I'm afraid not sir," the woman reddened. "You see we ran out of toilet paper last week and . . . well since nobody ever comes here . . ."

"It's alright," Harry interrupted not wanting to hear anymore of the explanation, "I don't need a diagram, I just wanted a look at the plans before I took a look at the wards."

"Oh," the woman nodded. "right this way."

The two of them walked through a door and entered a room that had an entire wall filled by a large graffiti covered chunk of cement.

"Were they effective?" Harry asked taking a doubtful glance at the section of wall that contained the last shred of the communist wards. "Maybe I'm missing something but this ward looks like it was put up by a first year."

"No," the woman shook her head. "Most of Russia's magical talent fought with the Whites. When the Bolsheviks took the country most of the magical talent went elsewhere. What they did have was quantity, the Reds did have a small number of Muggle Born's and over the years they were used to train any new Muggle Born's that didn't get rescued by one of the schools."

"Training wasn't too good I take it?"

"I'm told that they spent more time learning to be 'Politically Reliable' then they did learning magic." The woman shrugged, "but there was an old saying during the cold war; 'it's quality verses quantity, but quantity has a quality all its own.'"

"Fascinating,"

"I think so," the woman agreed. "Now this next section . . ."

Harry spent almost two hours exploring the magical section of the museum, spending his time alternately shaking his head in disgust and rubbing his chin in interest.

"And here we are at the end of our tour," the woman smiled nervously. "Would you care to get something in our gift shop?"

"Do you have anything good?" Harry asked with a raised eyebrow.

"Well," the woman managed a weak chuckle. "You could get a piece of the wall and an old Soviet Spell Book."

"Is the book any good," Harry asked quietly.

"Not really," the woman shrugged helplessly. "Most of the defensive spells are next to useless, but the attack spells are fairly good . . . so long as you don't need precision. If you don't need precision then the attack spells are some of the most effective in the world."

"In what way?"

"They were designed to be used by poorly educated conscripts," the woman smiled. "It is very difficult to mess up their casting. And if you buy now, I'll even throw in a book of spells used by one of the more . . . secretive organizations."

"Fine," Harry nodded pulling out his wallet. "I guess I can't pass up an offer like that."

"Here you are sir," the woman passed over a bag containing Harry's purchases. "Do you need anything else?"

"One thing," Harry nodded. "Could you direct me to the Weltrestaurant Markthalle?"

"No problem," the woman nodded flipping through a book on her desk. "The address is Puklerstrasse 34 Kreuzberg, 10997. If you're taking a cab just tell the driver to take you to Eisenbahn Markthalle, its connected to the restaurant."

"Thanks," Harry nodded. "Have a good day."

"One more thing," the woman bit her lower lip. "If you're going to eat there, try the Konisberger Klopse, it's one of my favorites."

"I'll keep that in mind," Harry laughed. "Have a good day."

Harry exited the building and called a cab. "Where to?" The driver asked not bothering to turn.

"Eisenbahn Markthalle," Harry replied quickly. "I've got a meeting with a friend of mine."

"You got it." The cab driver nodded, "mind if I ask what you're planning on doing in Berlin?"

"Just meeting some friends and having a look around," Harry smiled, thinking about his moment of fleeting childhood happiness. "Just wanted to take a look at where the wall use to be."

"Must be strange for you to see the city without the wall in it?"

"It was there for so long," Harry gave a sad smile. "Seeing it fall is one of the happiest memories of my life."

"I'll bet," the driver smirked. "You gonna visit the Brandenburg gate?"

"I don't know," Harry shrugged his shoulders. "Might go through it while I'm here, but I think that it might be strange to see it without the border guards."

"I'll bet," the driver muttered.

"What was that?" Harry asked.

"We'll be there shortly."

"Oh," Harry nodded. "Thank you."

The cab stopped in front of the Eisenbahn Markthalle and Harry stepped out onto the curb. "Mr. Black, it's so good to see you again." A short gnomish man and his henchgirl walked up.

"Hello," HENCHGIRL waved.

"Hello Professor, HENCHGIRL." Harry smiled to his two friends. "How are you doing?"

"Very well," the short man beamed up at his dangerous friend. "I trust that you've had nothing untoward happen to you since our last visit?"

"It's been a series of unfortunate events," Harry sighed. "For some reason, odd things keep happening to me."

"Well," the Professor paused for a moment unsure of how to reply. "You can tell us about it later, would you care to dine with us?"

"Sure," Harry nodded. "It's good to see the two of you again."

"You as well," the Professor replied and HENCHGIRL nodded her agreement. "We have the . . . item that you requested, along with a few other things that may peak your interest."

"We can deal with that later." Harry put a hand on each of his friend's shoulders, and with a sad smile said, "for now, why don't we just have a nice meal together and talk about happy things."

The two inventors agreed, each wondering what demons were haunting their friend and each silently vowing to do what they could to ease his torment.

IIIIIIII

"Well?"

"Black was very cooperative," the cab driver smiled. "He told me that he doesn't plan to kill anybody in Berlin, just visit with some friends and see the sights."

"Anything else?"

“He talked about the cold war, said it was strange seeing the city without the wall.” The driver laughed, “said that watching it fall was one of the happiest memories of his life. Probably because of all the time he spent in the Soviet Sector trying to bring it down.”

“I'm sure,” the other officer nodded. “Anything else?”

“I talked to the woman in the museum. She said that Black mostly just came in and stared at the section of wards, then muttered something about how shoddy the Eastern Block's defensive magic was. Said that their offensive magic was fairly good if you weren't looking for subtly, but that their defensive magic sucked.” The cab driver chuckled, “said that any first year student with a bit of magical instruction wouldn't have a problem making a hole in the first few layers of wards.”

“I suppose that he'd know better than anybody,” the older officer shook his head. “The things he must have seen.”

“That's not all,” the cab driver smiled. “When I was at the museum, I glanced at one of the photos showing the wall being torn down.”

“And?”

“I noticed that one of the men tearing down the wall in the Photo had a blurred face.” The cab driver had an 'I know something you don't know' smile.

“So the photographer wasn't very skilled, so what?”

“The men around him had recognisable faces, only his was blurred.” The cab driver smirked, “that's not all. I took a look at one of the other pictures showing life behind the wall and I saw another picture with a blurred face.”

“And?”

“This one was walking out of Stasi headquarters during the final days,” the cab driver held up his hand. “The same day that some one used a little magic to disable their paper shredders.”

“That's very interesting but it doesn't prove anything.”

“I never said it did,” the cab driver smiled. “It's not the sort of thing for official reports, but I'm sure that if we can find a few more of these coincidences then we won't have to buy our own beer for weeks.”

AN: I was going to make this a longer chapter, then I realised that the next chapter would be 13. A lot of violence is coming and I figured that chapter 13 would be the place to have it, unless I forget.

A-man – It's mostly dumb luck and magical items, Harry is rather clueless. As for having great skills, Harry is going up against people who rely on fear not skill. Or to put it another way, Harry isn't too good but the people that he us up against are even worse. The rest of what happened is dumb luck, Harry doesn't know, it's like the 'man who knew too little,' or at best 'if looks could kill.'

The Birth of Mr. Black

"Just drop us off here," Harry told the driver as they neared his hotel, "it's only a about one hundred meters from here and we can walk the rest of the way."

"You got it," the driver nodded. "Have a good day."

"You too," Harry replied as he and his companions got out of the car. "Do either of you need any help with your bags?"

"No thank you," the Professor shook his head. "Both Henchgirl and I are stronger than we look."

"Alright then," Harry shrugged his shoulders. "Was there some reason you wanted to wait until we got to my room before we looked at the things you wanted to show me?"

"I don't want the people watching us to know about what we've been able to develop with your assistance," the Professor glanced around nervously and several unseen watchers stepped back into deeper shadows. "Besides, our hotel doesn't have room service."

"Ok," Harry nodded holding the door open for his two friends. "We can wait."

They spent the trip to Harry's room in silence, and when they entered the Professor held up his hand. "Would you mind putting up a privacy charm or two? I'd really rather not take the chance that anyone is listening in."

"One moment," Harry pulled out one of his new books and began flipping through it, then paused to study a page for a few moments. "Absconditus Oratio."

The Professor looked around for a moment, "what kind of spell was that?"

"It was a spell that was used by one of the old Soviet organizations," Harry flicked his wand to put up a few more charms. "I haven't used it before and it doesn't hurt to be redundant."

"No it doesn't Mr. Black," the Professor agreed, putting up a few spells of his own. "I have your new wand here." The Professor pulled out a small box, "take a look and tell me what you think."

Harry removed the lid from the box and spent several moments gazing at the wand, "it's so short."

"Yes it is," the Professor agreed, "gives a bit more control on the wand movements, it also makes concealment much easier."

Harry pulled it out and gave it an experimental wave, "the handle feels a bit strange, and I'm not feeling any sort of magical connection."

"The handle's been designed to make it easier to retain in a fight and you're not feeling a connection because we haven't connected it to you yet," the Professor smiled. "The handle contains a small plug of a magically reactive metal that can be calibrated to react to specific magical signatures. When in the presence of the correct magical field, the plug slides out of the way and allows a connection to the user's magical core. Without the correct magical signature, it physically blocks any connection."

"What if I were to grip it in front of the handle?" Harry asked with a raised eyebrow, "and what's this thing made out of?"

"If you gripped it in front of the handle then you might be able to cast spells, but I don't believe it would be very effective." The Professor smiled, "I borrowed a bit of technology from the muggles to make the body of the wand and used a substance called carbon fiber. As you suggested, I also checked up on ministry regulations. Your wand is untraceable and nearly undetectable, I hope that it meets your expectations."

"It does," Harry nodded. "You mentioned that you had a few other things you wanted to show me?"

"Well, Henghgirl would be the one to ask about that . . . Henghgirl?"

"Um, we weren't trying to do anything that would annoy you but since you left France," Henghgirl smiled nervously. "Well, we've had a lot of requests from various Law Enforcement agency's on getting access to you floo tapping ability's. And we were wondering if we could get a look at it."

"I don't have the ability to tap floo," Harry looked at his companions with an odd expression. "Why would they think I could?"

"Of course you don't," Henghgirl nodded. "But um, we were doing some research and I think we might have found a way to do it."

"Really?" Harry raised his eyebrow. "Tell me more."

"It's just a theory really," the Professor interrupted, "and I'd rather wait until we have a chance to test it before we explain it in depth."

"If you like," Harry nodded.

"It's still just a theory," Henghgirl agreed. "But while we were working on it we came up with this." She pulled out another small box. "We were able to miniaturize a connection to the floo network."

"But it's worthless," the Professor reentered the conversation. "It's too small to put anything through it and we can't get much of an image."

"Can you still use it to communicate?" Harry asked. "Because if you could, then you've invented something rather useful."

"But it doesn't do nearly the amount of things a floo should," the Professor frowned, "we were hoping you could tell us how to improve it so it would be useful."

"Make it portable," Harry shrugged. "It will always be useful to have a portable way of communicating with people, I imagine that it could also be very profitable."

"We never thought about that," Henchgirl admitted sheepishly, "we were just rather frustrated that we couldn't figure out how to engineer it so that it would do everything that a normal floo can do."

"Anything else?" Harry resisted the urge to laugh.

"I don't suppose you'd be willing to help us create undetectable wards?" The Professor asked with a hopeful expression, "I'd really like to know how to make undetectable wards."

"Sure," Harry nodded. "I could help you figure out how to change the colors, after that I don't think I can help you much."

"Colors?"

"Yeah," Harry shrugged. "Make them show the same colors as their background or have them in one of the non-visible colors or something."

"Thank you Mr. Black, we shall." the Professor's hands were shaking in eagerness. "Now, did you have any new ideas on items that would be useful?"

"I did get stabbed in Marseilles," Harry rubbed his newest scar. "I was wondering if you could develop some sort of armor that I could wear under my normal clothes?"

"Well . . ." the Professor rubbed his chin, "we've got just the thing, Steel Silk."

"Steel Silk?"

"We developed it after hearing about a muggle substance called Steel Wool," Henchgirl replied. "We figured that if the muggles could make something then we could improve it. It's as soft and smooth as silk but many times stronger, and it can't be cut like normal silk. Wearing it would provide protection from any sort of blade and quite a few spells."

"That could work, thanks" Harry nodded enthusiastically. "By the way, why did the two of you come to Germany?"

"To build a Zeppelin of course," the Professor replied and Henchgirl nodded in agreement.

"Why?" Harry asked, and immediately regretted it.

"Where else would we build a Zeppelin but Germany," Henchgirl replied as if it were obvious. "I suppose that we could have built one somewhere else, but it wouldn't have had the same Zeppelin building atmosphere that Germany does."

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"I'll be damned," one of the watchers commented to his partner, "I haven't seen that charm for a while."

"What charm?" the other watcher asked with a raised eyebrow.

"Never did find out the name to it," the first watcher shrugged. "It's a charm that was extensively used by Soviet State Security to keep their meetings from being overheard, it is very effective and almost undetectable."

"Then how did you spot it so fast?"

"I said almost," the first watcher chuckled. "Once you know what to look for it stands out like a miniature sun. Anyone that was working before the wall fell could spot it."

"Then why did Black put it up?"

"Why wouldn't he?" The first watcher shrugged, "he's not trying to hide from us and as I said before, it is a very effective spell."

"Oh," the younger watcher nodded. "Where do you think I could learn it?"

"You can't," the older man smiled. "The Russians still consider it a secret despite its drawbacks and the fact that the cold war ended."

"Then where did Black learn it?" The younger man reddened when he noticed the expression on his partner's face. "Right, he probably walked into Lubyanka and took it out from everybody's noses."

"Or he got it from a defector, or he learned it in an interrogation or who knows?" The older man shrugged his shoulders, "but I think that your story is the better one to repeat after work. The fact that he used that spell really only tells us one useful thing."

"What's that?"

"It confirms that he was one of the heavy hitters during the cold war," the older man smirked. "Nobody else would know one of their spells."

"Oh," the younger man nodded. "Should we report this?"

"Report the fact that he used the spell and answer any questions they have," the older man nodded. "And then come right back."

"Yes sir." The younger man disappeared with a pop, and reappeared in a busy office.

"What do you need?" One of the men looked up from behind his desk to regard the new arrival.

"I was told to report that Mr. Black used an old Soviet spell," the young man replied. "My partner said that it was the one that was easy to spot when you knew what to look for but that it was still effective."

"I see," the man nodded. "Was Black alone?"

"He was in the company of two other individuals a male and a female."

"Were you able to identify them?"

"No," the young man shook his head. "Black used code names when he talked to them."

"I see," the man nodded. "You had better get back to your post."

"Yes sir," the young man disappeared with a pop.

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Harry awoke late the next morning and was surprised to find his two guests awake. "Good morning, how was your night?"

"Night?" A confused Professor lifted his head, "Henchgirl and I were unable to go to sleep without solving the problem you gave us on making a portable floo."

"Oh," Harry walked over to the room's phone and ordered breakfast. "Did you do it?"

"Well it took us all night but here it is," a bleary eyed Henchgirl handed a small package to Mr. Black. "We had to cut some corners to get it done so soon, what do you think?"

"It looks ok so far," Harry turned the small object over in his hands. "Why does it have 'Zippo' written on it?"

"Because those lighters already have everything we could want, they are light weight, they have a built in ignition system, they are small and portable," the Professor was struggling to stay awake. "And we were able to find it for sale in the hotel's shop downstairs, I'm afraid we had to charge it to your room."

"No problem," Harry shrugged his shoulders, "how does it work?"

"For outgoing communications, open it up and spin the little wheel, that will cause a small measure of floo powder to go into the flame. For incoming communications, it vibrates to indicate that someone is attempting to call you," the Professor blinked his eyes. "Henchgirl thought that it might be a bad thing if it were to suddenly make strange noises at odd times."

"She was right," Harry nodded. "Does it use standard floo powder or does it need some sort of special floo powder?"

"Doesn't need floo powder," Henggirl smiled proudly. "We managed to enchant it to transfigure the flint into floo powder, and we also managed to enchant the flint and fuel supply to be never ending."

"Very nice," Harry rubbed his new toy appreciatively, "could you change it to only use a special kind of floo powder?"

"Child's play," the Professor replied. "But why would we want to do that?"

"Well," Harry started slowly. "It seems to me that this little device will become quite popular in the future, and if it needs a special floo powder than I imagine that the potential profit would be enormous."

The Professor and Henggirl shared a look, "profit?"

"Yes," Harry nodded. "You could make quite a bit of money with this little gadget."

"Money?" Henggirl was astounded by the possibilities, "just think of all the inventions we could make if we had funding."

"Thank you Mr. Black," the Professor smiled. "Now if you will excuse us, it's time for Henggirl and I to go to bed."

"Use mine," Harry motioned towards the closed bedroom door. "If you're willing to wait a few minutes, breakfast will arrive and I'll have them change the sheets while you eat."

"Thank you," Henggirl smiled. "But won't we be disturbing you?"

"No," Harry shook his head, "I'm going to be out most of the day."

"Where are you planning to go?" Henggirl asked with a smile

Harry's face lost all emotion, "Dachau."

"Oh," Henggirl's smile disappeared, "I . . .oh."

"I'll see you two later," Harry stood up and walked toward the door. "I'm sure that I'll have some more Ideas for you later."

"Yes," the Professor agreed sadly. "Later."

Harry walked out of his room and out of his hotel, and soon found himself in the magical section of town.

"Excuse me," Harry asked a passerby. "Could you direct me to a travel agency or some other place where I could get an internal portkey?"

"Right behind you," the man replied nervously.

"Thank you," Harry turned and walked into the shop.

"How may I . . ." the shopkeep trailed off when he saw the expression on his customer's face. "What can I do for you?"

"I need a Portkey to Dachau and back," Harry's voice showed no emotion. "How much?"

"Fif . . . fifty Marks," the man replied nervously. "Will that be all?"

"Yes," Harry agreed coldly. "That will be all."

"Here you are then Sir." The man handed over a short length of chain, "it . . . it will activate in a few seconds, to return just say Berlin."

"Thank you." Harry took the portkey and disappeared.

Harry spent an indefinite amount of time just Wandering around the camp, staring with morbid horror at the Crematoriums and gas chambers. Finally he found himself standing in front of the doors to the furnace in the north west corner of the camp, staring dully at the manufacturer's name . . . Toph & Sohne. One by one, the camp's ghosts their eyes still showing the pain of their last moments surrounded him.

Harry looked into their eyes and fell to his knees. Taking several short breaths to keep his stomach under control, all around stood the victims of the camp watching him. "I won't . . ." Harry lower lip quivered, "I won't let this happen again, I swear to you that I won't fail again."

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"Well?"

"He's spent the entire day at the camp Sir," the young officer nervously replied. "Earlier today, he muttered something about not failing again and never allowing it to happen again. Other than that, he hasn't made a sound."

"Show him what we found," the Chief of Magical Law Enforcement ordered. "And ask for his help."

"Sir?"

"He made a vow," the older man replied rubbing a spot on his forearm, "we can't do anything."

"Yes sir," the young man agreed. "Do you really think he can help us?"

"No, I don't think he can help us solve this case," the old man shook his head. "I think he'll fulfill his vow . . . and heaven help those poor bastards when he finds them."

"I understand sir," the officer nodded. "Do you want me to take anyone with me?"

"I'll ask Grenzschutz Nine if they can spare a few men," the old man sighed. "Have them shadow you, to provide any assistance you might require."

"Yes Sir," the young man agreed and turned towards the door.

"And Hans," the old man worked his jaw. "Be careful, it would kill your mother if anything happened to you."

"Yes papa, I will be careful." The young man agreed without turning around, "goodbye papa, I promise that I will make you proud of me."

"You already have"

Hans walked slowly towards the the section of the building where the wards were thin enough to allow magical travel and then, disappeared with a pop.

"Mr. Black?" Hans approached slowly. "My name is Hans Ritter, I'm with the Bundesamt für Magie."

Harry turned to stare at the man who had interrupted his contemplation, "what can I do for you?"

"We were wondering if you would be willing to help us with a case?" Hans held out a folder, "we've hit a dead end and we were hoping that you would be wiling to use your . . . unique insights to help us solve things."

"I am always willing to help competent Law Enforcement," Harry opened the folder, "what's the case?"

"A young muggle born girl was found murdered last week," Officer Ritter began. "She was supposed to attend one of our magical schools later this year, and we believe that she was killed to prevent that."

"What about her family," Harry turned a page in the file and froze, unable to take his eyes off of the photo of the young victim.

"They were also killed," Hans replied nervously. "We have a few ideas about which group might have done it, but we have no suspects at this time."

Harry stared at the picture, he saw a small girl with a pretty smile, he saw a bushy haired girl that would never help her friends with homework, he saw a girl with overly large front teeth who's parents wouldn't let her fix them with magic, he saw red. "Where is the nearest bar that your suspect groups like to gather." Harry asked without emotion.

"There's a bar named Blut Hexe," Hans nervously replied. "I want you to know that most Germans aren't like this, most of us find this as disgusting as you do."

"I know," Harry's voice showed no emotion. "Take me to Blut Hexe."

"Yes sir," Hans agreed. "If you'll just touch this bottle cap."

The two men reappeared in front of a disreputable looking building, "is this the place?"

"It is Mr. Black," Ritter agreed. "But I don't think that anybody will be in for a few hours."

"Wait here," Harry walked toward the door. "Reducto."

"You have a warrant?" A slimy looking man sneered from behind the bar, "if not then I'm going to have to ask you to leave."

"Shut up," Harry drew his new wand and hit the wall behind the man with a blasting curse. "There were some murders committed, a little girl and her family were killed because she was magical."

"So?" The man replied nervously, "one less mud blood."

Harry walked towards the man and placed the tip of his wand on the man's knee cap, "I suggest you tell me who did it and where I can find them."

"You can't do this," the man was shaking. "There are laws that say you can't do this."

"There are also laws that say you can't go around killing little girls and their families," Harry retorted. "And it offends me when people break them. Now answer the questions."

"I don't know anything," the bartender protested. "Nobody's said anything."

"The kind of people that I'm looking for wouldn't be smart enough to keep their mouths shut," Harry's face looked as if it could have been carved from stone. "Reduc . . ."

"WAIT," the man screamed. "Wait, I'll tell you everything."

"Yes," Harry agreed. "You will."

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Hans was pacing nervously when Harry stepped out of the ruined bar, "well?"

"Do you know where Tierparkstrasse is?" Harry asked ignoring the man's questioning look.

"Yes I do," Hans nodded. "Why?"

"Take me there."

"Alright," Ritter nodded, pulling out another portkey.

The two men felt a pull from behind their navels and appeared in front of a large house, "do you have any information about one of your suspected groups being in this area?"

"Yes we do," Ritter nodded. "Are they who you're looking for?"

Ignoring the man, Harry walked towards another house down the street. Knocking on the house's door, Harry waited calmly for one of the house's inhabitants to answer the door.

"What do you want?" A dirty man answered the door.

"Are you a member of a group that believes in pure blood nonsense?" Harry asked with a raised eyebrow.

"Yes I am," the man sneered.

"Did you kill a young girl and her family to prevent her from getting a magical education?"

"You a cop?" The man grinned, "you trying to get me to confess?"

"No," Harry shook his head. "I just wanted to make sure I got the right people, Reducto." Harry stepped over the body and into house, "is there anybody here who doesn't believe in a racist ideology?" A dozen shocked men reached for their wands. "I thought not, Reducto, Aduro, Rpom."

"Nobody move," Several men in black ran into the room. "Mr. Black, would you please lower your wand?"

The men watched nervously as Harry considered the question, "of course I will. Do you need anything else or can I go?"

"You can go," the man nodded. "Thank you for the help."

Harry took out the length of chain that he had been given earlier that day, "Berlin.

"What a mess," the man shook his head looking around. "He really doesn't believe in subtlety does he?"

"He normally does," Ritter shook his head at the mess. "Most of his kills look like accidents or coincidences, I guess he didn't feel like making the effort today."

"What do you think set him off?"

Ritter paused, remembering his conversation with the enigmatic Mr. Black. "The child . . . Black was angry about what they did to the child and his control slipped."

"Makes sense." The other man nodded, "better call the Coroner . . . and tell him to bring a mop."

"I'm going back to the office," Ritter held a hand in front of his nose to block out some of the smell. "Can your men keep watch here?"

"Sure," the other man nodded. "Take your time."

"I'll be back as soon as I can," Ritter took one last look at the horrifying scene and disappeared.

"You know," the man addressed his team in a low voice. "I think it's a shame that there weren't more of them here when Black arrived." The men looked at him with expressionless faces, "on the other hand he doesn't seem like the sort to stop here." He gestured towards the scene of carnage, "I'm willing to bet that we're going to find quite a few more of these in the future. I'm also willing to bet that if something like this happened again in the near future, that it would be blamed on Mr. Black."

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Harry returned to his Hotel room and immediately started packing.

"Is there something wrong?" The Professor asked nervously, "what happened?"

"I'm going to leave here," Harry's eyes were blank. "Then I don't know what I'm going to do."

"What happened?" The Professor repeated.

"Group of death eater wannabes killed a little girl," Harry paused. "I killed them."

"I see," the Professor nodded. "Why don't you come stay with us for a little while?"

"Stay with you?"

"Yes," the Professor nodded. "You could see the Zeppelin, and we could all talk about new inventions and forget that today ever happened."

Harry nodded, "alright."

"I'll create a portkey," the Professor grabbed one of the free hotel pens. "You get Henchgirl."

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"Mr. Black is in Germany sir," a large dirty man addressed a shadowed figure. "What do you want us to do?"

"See about contacting him," the shadowed figure replied. "See if he's willing to give us the same deal he gave to the Italians."

"That might not be a good idea sir," the man licked his lips nervously. "Black's not in a very good mood right now."

"What happened?"

"A group of blood purists killed a child," the large man replied. "Black killed several, but not all of them and I don't think he would be very happy to see anybody right now."

"I see . . . tell the men," the shadowed figure paused. "Tell them that it's open season on blood purists, the sooner they're gone the sooner Black will leave the country."

"Do you still want to obey Black's rules?"

"What did he do to the purists?" The shadowed figure asked with a raised eyebrow.

"I'm told that the Coroner is going to have to spend most of the next week trying to figure out what parts belong to who," the large man replied. "And several of the cops are saying that we're in the calm before the storm, they say that Black's about to go on a rampage."

"Follow Black's rules," the shadowed figure nodded. "And start dealing with the purists, the sooner they're gone the sooner Black will leave."

"Yes sir"

AN: It has come to my attention that I've been using American terms rather than British ones. This is because um . . . it's a very subtle plot point, you see Harry's piercings of translation are on the American English setting and that's why, yeah that's it. It got a bit long so I decided to cut things off here, I will try to get another part out soon.

Thanks go to Ed Becerra for the idea that a portable floo should look like a cigarette lighter, that's much better than the idea that I had.

Thanks go to CJ for the idea of making a special floo powder for the Zippos.

japanese-jew – I think that Hagrid really believed what he said. But based on what we've seen: if Hogwarts is the best then I weep for the wizarding world. I think that Hogwarts is one of the more prestigious schools in Europe, but I don't know about it being the best.

Zaxxon – I agree

OMAKE

"MR. BLACK IS HERE"

The announcement was met by dead silence and then chaos erupted. Grown men fainted, women screamed, hardened veterans began discreetly calming their nerves with shots of schnapps, and the chief Mortician . . . he wrote an order commanding all of his off duty people return to the morgue immediately to prepare for the massive influx of corpses that would soon arrive. Mr. Black had come to town, and death was sure to follow.

The Black Massacre

"Luna," Laetus Lovegood called his only daughter. "I have another assignment for you."

"What is it father?" The spacey young girl walked in, "do you want me to go to Germany?"

"No, I'll cover that." There was no way in hell that he was going to send his daughter to Germany with what had been happening there for the last few days. "I have something more important for you to report on."

"What?" Luna blinked curiously. "Did we finally get proof that the Malfoy family was descended from house elves?"

"Not yet," Laetus frowned. "The Ministry still won't let me have one of them for testing."

"Oh," Luna's shoulders dropped in disappointment. "That's too bad, what do you have for me then?"

"I want you to go to Holland and get some more information on the Snorlacks."

"Ok father," Luna nodded. "I hope you don't get too bored writing a story about all those murders in Germany."

"I hope so too dear," Laetus nodded. "But someone has to do it and since you have the good article, I'm stuck with the boring one."

Luna walked over to the fire, tossed in a handful of floo and shouted out her destination. Then she squealed in happiness as she felt herself get thrown around on her way to her destination.

"Welcome to Holland," a board looking man greeted her upon her arrival. "How may I help you?"

"I'm supposed to meet with someone from the Department of Magical Creatures to get information on an article for the Quibbler." Luna smiled brightly.

"Oh yes," the man nodded checking his list. "We've been expecting you."

"Really?" Luna asked delightedly, "have I been declared an enemy of the state? Are you going to put me in your secrete prison on the moon?"

"Hunh?" The customs agent shot her an odd look, "hey Doc, you're reporter is here."

"Good afternoon Ms. Lovegood," the man identified as Doc walked up. "I'm Doctor Wim Cornelissen. I understand that you have some questions to ask me?"

"Yes I do," Luna nodded. "Why hasn't anyone been able to get information on the existence of Snorlacks before?"

"We've discovered that the males put out a natural Wizard repelling charm which has until now kept them from being noticed."

"What about the females?"

"Snorlacks like to den in large hills, and the females rarely leave the nesting sites." The Doctor smiled, "and they also emit a natural muggle repelling charm. We believe that this is why muggles think that Holland is a flat country."

"Because there are snorlacks living in all the hills?" Luna asked with a raised eyebrow.

"Yes," the Doctor replied with a laugh. "Fascinating isn't it?"

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"Come in Hans," the chief pulled a bottle out of his desk. "And have a seat."

The rather pale faced office sat down, "what do you want to know?"

"I have the reports," the chief made a motion towards a stack of paper on his desk. "But I'd like to hear what you experienced."

"I took Mr. Black to the Blut Hexe, Mr. Black broke down the door and walked in walked in . . ."

"One quick question Hans," the chief interrupted. "Did he have his wand out when he broke down the door?"

"I . . . no," Hans looked at his father in shock. "I remember him drawing his wand as he walked into the bar."

"I see," the chief nodded. "He's been known to use wandless magic before, and I was wondering if he used it this time. Continue."

"Yes papa, he came out a few minutes later and told me to take him to Tierparkstrasse. He ordered me to wait at our point of arrival and walked up the street." Hans took a deep breath, "I called the men and we arrived at the house about two minutes later and found Black standing over a dead man and staring at a room full of corpses."

"I see," the chief nodded. "Thank you Hans, I understand now."

"Understand what papa?" Hans's eyes were filled with confusion.

"Why he was so overt." The chief pored himself a drink and motioned for his son to do the same. "When I decided to ask for his help, I did it on the assumption that he would . . . solve our problem the same way he's done such things in the past."

"You expected them to die in an accident?" Hans took a sip, "or for it to be a clear cut case of self defence?"

"Yes I did," the chief nodded. "And I was more than a bit surprised when I found out what he did. Now I want you to think, did you see him do anything illegal?"

"I . . . no," Hans shook his head. "The worst thing I saw him do was break down a door."

"Which is punishable by a fine at most," the chief smiled. "Forensics spent quite a bit of time in that house, do you know what they found?"

"I'm not sure," Hans shrugged his shoulders. "What did they find?"

"Nothing," the old man smiled. "They couldn't even prove that any spells had been used, let alone that Black cast any. So what we have is no physical proof and a room full of dead witnesses."

"But I saw Black go to the house," Hans took another sip. "Doesn't that mean anything?"

"You saw him walk towards a house," the old man nodded. "But you didn't see him commit any crime, he would say that he found the house like it is. How long was he out of your sight?"

"No more than five minutes."

"So you expect me to believe that a man was able to kill several blood purists without leaving any evidence?" The chief smiled, "and was able to do it in less than five minutes."

"I see," Hans nodded. "But why didn't he do things the way he normally does?"

"Some things," the old man rubbed a spot on his arm. "Some things leave a mark on you, I think that your file brought up too many old memories."

"What do you . . ." Hans stopped as he realised why his father was rubbing his arm. "I understand papa, thank you for explaining things."

"I'm always glad to explain things to you Hans," the chief nodded. "It looks like Black is calming down."

"Why do you say that papa?"

"In the past few days, there have been several murders." The old man gestured towards a stack of files on his desk, "some of them were messy and some of them were clean and professional."

"And?"

"The last two looked like accidents," the old man smiled. "And another looks like suicide. One man got so drunk that he passed out and drowned in two inches of water, another walked into traffic and was hit by a large truck."

"What about the suicide?"

"Found with a rope around his neck in a locked room, though there are some people that think Black didn't kill that one." The old man laughed, "they say that he killed himself because that was the only way he could think of to escape."

"I do have one more thing I'd like to ask if it's not too much trouble?"

"What is it Hans?"

"Were they able to identify any of the spells he used to eliminate the men in the house?"

"There were no signatures but one of the forensic technicians said that the damage was similar to several of the old Russian battle spells."

"I see," Hans nodded. "That does fit some of the things that people have been saying about him."

"What are you planning to do now?" The chief finished his drink and pored another, "now that your case has been closed."

"I still have one loose end to take care of before I finish my case," Hans smirked. "And I plan on having a bit of fun with it."

"Then you best get to it Hans," the chief waved his hand in dismissal. "It's always best to get things done early."

"Good bye sir," Hans stood up and opened the door.

"Good bye son," the chief replied to his son's retreating back.

Hans walked down the corridors until he found himself in front of the door to one of the interrogation rooms. "Well?"

"He's ready for you sir," another officer replied. "Are you sure you want us recording this?"

"I'm sure," Hans nodded. "Don't miss a second."

"Ok," the other officer shrugged. "If that's what you want."

Hans walked into the bare room and took a seat across from the suspect. "Good afternoon sir, how are you doing today?"

"You've got nothing on me," the ugly man sneered. "My arrest wasn't legal and you have to let me go."

"Arrest?" Hans asked with a shocked expression, "you weren't arrested. You were brought down here to swear out a complaint against the man who broke the door to your business. Unless of course you'd rather let things go?"

"No," the ugly man replied smugly. "He broke the law and I want him to go to jail for it."

"Well," Hans shook his head. "I don't think that he'll go to jail, but he will have to pay a rather large fine and for the repair of your property."

"Good," the ugly man nodded. "What do I have to do now?"

"Just sign these papers," Hans slid a stack of papers across the table and we can start things.

"You trying ta trick me?" The ugly man carefully checked the papers. "I mean, this all seems to be in order."

"Good," Hans nodded. "I wouldn't want you to be displeased by the service that you've experienced during your stay as our guest."

"Can I go now?"

"One moment," Hans stood and walked towards the door. "You still have to identify the man who damaged your property."

"Oh," the ugly man grinned. "Be nice to be on the other side of the mirror for once I guess."

"I'm sure," Hans nodded and knocked on the door.

"What do you need?" The officer from before stuck his head in.

"I've got a complaint for you to process," Hans handed over the stack of papers. "And I need you to pick up Mr. Black for me, I need him to stand in a line up."

"No problem," the officer fought hard to keep his amusement hidden. "I'll try to get him here as soon as possible."

"What did you just say?" The ugly man had a look of terror on his face, "did you just tell him to get Mr. Black?"

"Why yes," Hans nodded. "Or didn't you know that he was the man that broke the door to your bar?"

"You didn't say anything about Mr. Black," the bartender shook his head. "I don't want to complain, I want to leave things alone."

"I'm afraid we cant do that sir," Hans shrugged. "The papers have already been filed and there is nothing I can do to stop the process now."

"I don't want go to court against Mr. Black." The ugly man's eyes darted around the room, "I don't want to swear out a complaint."

"The only way I could stop things is if you told me that you had sworn out a false complaint," Hans kept a helpful expression on his face. "And I would advise you not to do that because the penalty for swearing out a false complaint is rather severe."

"I admit it, I lied." The ugly man screamed, "and I done a lot of other things too. Just stop that complaint."

"Really?" Hans had a predatory look on his face, "what other things?"

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"Welcome back everyone," Dumbledore gave the room a grandfatherly smile. "I call this meeting of the Order of the Phoenix to order. My first order is that those members of the Order who have been searching for Mr. Potter on my orders stand up and address the Order and tell us what you have learned."

"Really Albus," Minerva frowned. "Couldn't you have found a way to phrase that without saying the word 'order' so many times?"

"No, no I couldn't." The headmaster ate a lemon drop, "if nobody has anything to report . . . then Alastor has something he'd like to share with us."

"Black's back," the scarred man leered. "And he's been busy."

"What did he do?" A random Order member asked to get the plot moving.

"In Italy he managed to convince the Mafia that backing the Dark Lord would," Moody paused. "Not be to their benefit."

"How did he manage to do that?" Dumbledore asked with a raised eyebrow.

"He told them that if they didn't comply, then he'd kill them all." The old Auror gave a wheezing laugh, "few of them didn't think he could do it and broke into his hotel room."

"Well?"

"He tossed one of them out a window, another down a staircase, and the last he gutted like a fish." Moody's eye spun around, "after that he went to Switzerland. The Dark Tosser must've found out because he sent a group of men to make an example."

"Was anybody injured in the attack?" Dumbledore's eyes turned serious, "do the Swiss authority's need any help to contain this outbreak?"

"No one was hurt," Moody shook his head. "Least no one important was hurt. Death Eaters all died in an accident before they could do anything, off the record Black messed with their portkey but nobody can prove anything."

"Were any of the Death Eaters identified as being members of the inner circle?" Dumbledore asked cautiously.

"The Swiss believe that one of the bodies might belong to Lucius Malfoy," Moody's voice held a trace of satisfaction. "And if it does, the I say it couldn't have happened to a better target."

"That might be why the Minister ordered a team of Aurors to go on twenty four hour alert." Shacklebolt entered the conversation, "he also mentioned that there may be some international travel involved in our 'secret mission.'"

"I see," Dumbledore nodded. "Where's Mr. Black now?"

"Germany," Moody dropped a handful of news paper clippings on the table. "And in the time he's been there, he's virtually wiped out any base of support that Voldemort might have been able to draw on."

The Order spent several minutes reading the articles and passing them around.

Die Unduldsamkeit

We the editors are sorry to say that this is the last issue of 'Die Unduldsamkeit, the news paper for people who hate muggles.' Unfortunately things like rising cost of production, the fact that due to Mr. Black the Obituary page is larger then the size of the last three

issues combined, and the fact that we are in fear of our lives. Have caused us to reach the decision that it's time to end before we suffer an accident or are killed in a bizarre and painful way. We would like to note that 'Die Toleranz the news paper for people who love muggles and fear Mr. Black.' Will be coming out next week to fill the gap created by the loss of Die Unduldsamkeit.

Blood bath in Germany: see page A14

By Laetus Lovegood

Death is in Germany and his name is Black. Over the past week, Germany's morgues have been filled with blood purists and other Death Eater sympathisers. They've been stabbed, beaten, hexed, poisoned, their deaths have been quick and clean, slow and painful and everything in between. After learning of this situation, we at the Quibbler found ourselves possessed by the need to know what started this chain of events, what we found may shock you. The trigger that caused what many are calling the 'Black Massacre' was the death of a young muggle born girl that was scheduled to begin school at the start of the next term. Sources close to the investigation have revealed that Mr. Black is not being sought for questioning due to the lack of evidence connecting him to any of the crimes. Speaking on the condition of anonymity, one Law Enforcement official gave the following statement. "The death of the little girl angered Mr. Black, and I only have one thing to say about that. Don't make him angry, you wouldn't like him when he's angry."

AN:For those who don't know, an OMAKE is a little extra at the end of an anime or fic. If you know why the chief was rubbing his arm then good for you, if not go read up on where Harry went last chapter.

A-man – I saw where you were coming from, he showed a bit more skill then I wanted to portray in the last chapter but I couldn't think of another way to write it. I think that the skill level he showed was still ok, relying more on surprise and simple (Russian) spells but I still wish I could have made it a bit more realistic.

ms dumplings – I have no idea what pairing (if any) will be in this story.

Athenakitty – When he goes back to school. After America, and for good at the end of the summer.

CloudySky – I've seen Zippos for sale in Japan, Saudi Arabia, Spain, Thailand, etc. I wouldn't be surprised one could also find it in Germany.

Smiley Face3 - It wasn't Hermione, the little girl hit too close to home, and after what he saw in the camp . . .

Lead Zeppelin

"Well?" Henggirl asked with a worried look on her face, "how is he?"

"He fell asleep right after he finished the second bottle." The Professor sat down next to his assistant, "I'm worried about him."

"I am too," Henggirl nodded. "What caused all this?"

"He saw some terrible things today," the Professor shook his head. "Very terrible things."

"What?"

"I can't tell you Henggirl," the Professor had a sad look on his face. "I can't bring myself to say it."

"I understand," Henggirl nodded.

"He started talking after he finished the first bottle," the Professor paused. "He told me some rather shocking things."

"What kind of things?"

"Some rather shocking things," the Professor held up his hand. "Before I tell you, I want you to remember that he's our friend and we agreed to stand by him."

"I know Professor," Henggirl was starting to get worried. "What could he have told you that would cause you to worry that I would forget?"

"Well," the Professor began. "He told me . . ."

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Harry awoke late the next morning with a pounding headache. "Oh god, where am I?"

"You're in our hanger," the Professor replied loudly. "Would you like a tour?"

"I'd like something to kill this hangover," Harry hissed out. "Or something to kill myself, at the moment I don't care which one I get."

"I'll have Henchgirl whip something up," the Professor nodded. "I'll be right back."

Harry spent several more minutes wallowing in agony before the Professor returned, "did you get it?"

"Yup," the Professor nodded proudly. "One sip of this would kill a herd of elephants."

"You do know I was being sarcastic about the whole killing myself thing right?" Harry asked without opening his eyes.

"Yes," the Professor nodded nervously. "Of course I did, I'll be right back with the potion. I just need to . . . take it out of the room for a few minutes before I give it to you."

"Fine," Harry sighed. "Why am I cursed with such a life."

"Here you are," the Professor returned with another strange looking potion. "One sip of this will kill your headache."

"Thank you," Harry downed the potion. "Why doesn't it taste like the bottom of a men's room floor?"

"I asked Henchgirl about that once," the Professor smiled. "She said that she could make them taste terrible if I wanted, but that it would add several steps and have no purpose other than to make my life more miserable."

"Oh," Harry's eyes narrowed as he contemplated all the vile concoctions that Madame Pomfrey had given him over the years. "Shall we take a look at this Zeppelin of yours?"

"Let's," the Professor agreed eagerly. "Walk this way."

"Sure," Harry shrugged and began following the Professor.

"There she is," the Professor nodded proudly. "Two hundred meters long and forty two meters in diameter. It is capable of speeds of up to two hundred kiloliters per hour and we believe that the charms will remain stable for up to ninety two years without maintenance."

"And I still say that a blimp would have been a better choice," Henggirl entered the conversation. "There are several advantages of a non or semi rigid frame over a rigid frame."

"Silence," the Professor glared up at his assistant. "A non rigid frame would not have provided the proper platform for our research."

"Admit it," Henggirl glared down at the Professor. "You just wanted to show off your 'great engineering skills' by building the large framework, no thoughts about the fact that one of the other designs would have been better."

"How dare you question . . ."

"Wow," Harry interrupted, "whatever it is, it's great. What did you fill it with?"

"Nothing," the Professor turned away from the glaring Henggirl. "It's more efficient that way."

"What do you mean nothing?" Harry gave his two friends a strange look, "how can you fill it with nothing?"

"It's all about volume," the Professor began to lecture. "If it weighs less then the material it displaces then it floats, if it weighs more it sinks, and if it weighs the same amount then it has neutral buoyancy."

"But how can you . . ." Harry stopped for a moment to think, "never mind I don't want to know how you do it. How do you go up and down?"

"To go down we pump air from the surrounding atmosphere into our tanks, to go up we pump the air out and to get neutral buoyancy we

either pump air in or out depending on if we are descending or ascending."

"Like a submarine?" Harry asked cautiously.

"A what?" The Professor asked.

"It's a boat that goes under water," Harry answered. "I think it works the same way that your airship does."

"Henchgirl, make a note of it."

"How do you prevent collisions with other aircraft?"

"Collisions? Other aircraft?" The Professor looked nervous.

"You do know that the sky's are filled with aircraft don't you?"

"But my research indicated that the Muggles have mostly given up using airships?" The Professor looked confused, "if that's so then what are they using?"

"Planes, helicopters, all kinds of things." Harry shrugged.

"Are they really so wide spread?" The Professor was intrigued, "my sources indicated that they were only used by military and by some of the more wealthy family's?"

"Things have changed," Harry sighed. "Any other questions?"

"No," the Professor shook his head. "Thank you again Mr. Black, you've prevented what could have been a terribly accident by informing us of these other aircraft."

"Happy to help," Harry smiled. "What are you using to power the propellers?"

"Henchgirl and I constructed several Tesla Disk Turbines to provide the necessary power," the Professor smiled. "We were going to use Stirling engines, but the Tesla design looked more interesting."

"That's good, I guess." Harry replied, making a mental note to find out more about engineering, "What are you going to do about a crew?"

"So long as we don't try anything too ambitious, Henchgirl and I are all the crew that this craft needs." the Professor smiled, "did you have any more ideas for items that we could build you?"

"I don't know," Harry shrugged. "Might be a good idea to have a backup wand of some sort, one that could be easily concealed as something else or something. I'd also like to get some sort of invisibility or concealment device that can't be seen through like an invisibility cloak can."

"Invisibility cloaks can be seen through?" The Professor's eyebrows shot up, "I didn't know that, who can do it?"

"I know for a fact that Alaster Moody, and Albus Dumbledore can," Harry scratched his chin. "Not sure how Dumbledore does it, but Moody has a magical spinning eye."

"Fascinating," the Professor was lost in thought. "It may take some time before I am able to come up with something like that."

"No problem," Harry shrugged. "If you can build something like that, great. If not then oh well."

"Thank you for your faith in us," the Professor smiled. "We'll get on it as soon as we figure out how to solve the mid air collision problem you mentioned earlier."

"Why not try something like what's used on the Knight bus?" Harry asked with an interested expression on his face, "it has to drive through busy streets and it doesn't crash into anything."

"That wouldn't work," the Professor waved his hand, "the . . . excuse me for one minute."

"Sure," Harry shrugged his shoulders.

"Henchgirl, HENCHGIRL." The Professor ran off in search of his assistant. "

Harry's smile dropped as soon as his friend was out of sight, he was still having problems trying to figure out how he was supposed to feel after what he had seen and done. This vacation was supposed to be a few months of relaxation, it was supposed to be a lifetime of living condensed into a summer holiday. Instead, it seemed as if the universe was refusing to let him alone, it seemed as if he was destined to be attacked and dragged into other peoples fights.

|||||||

"Yes?"

"Good afternoon Mrs. Granger," The Headmaster smiled. "I was wondering if I could talk to your daughter for a few minutes?"

"Of course," Mrs. Granger smiled. "Come right in and have a seat while I get Hermione."

"Thank you," the Headmaster gave his best grandfatherly grin.

"You wanted to see me Professor?" Hermione asked, entering the room.

"Yes," the Headmaster nodded. "I'm trying to get into touch with Harry, and I was hoping that you would be willing to help me."

"Why do you need to talk to him?" Hermione asked with a neutral expression.

"There are a few things that I need to tell him, things that I should have told him a long time ago." The Headmaster exhaled, "I would also like to make sure that he has a way to contact the Order if he needs help or is in trouble."

"Oh," Hermione frowned. "So you're not going to make him go back to his relatives house?"

"No," Dumbledore shook his head. "I came to a realisation after hearing your theory about why he left. There is an old saying, 'Those who are willing to sacrifice freedom for security deserve neither freedom nor security.' I wondered what that had made me, the man who was willing to take another's freedom to keep them safe."

"I'm sure you were doing what you thought was best," Hermione tried to cheer the old man.

"There is a saying about good intentions," the Headmaster forced a smile. "But that isn't what I came here to talk to you about. Do you have any idea where we might find Harry? Mr. Weasley seemed to think that he would be living or working in or around a Quidditch stadium."

"Ron sometimes has a hard time telling the difference between his wants and dreams and other people's," Hermione frowned. "Continuing that thought, I don't think you would find Harry in any of the world's great library's or bookstores. Maybe . . . maybe in a circus or around an amusement park, maybe a zoo."

"What makes you think that?" Dumbledore's eyes were filled with interest.

"I think that he wants to fill an entire summer with things that he's never been able to experience before." Hermione paused, "Harry didn't have much of a childhood so I think that he might be trying to give himself one."

"Thank you," Albus silently cursed himself for being such a fool. "You've been most helpful."

"If you find Harry," Hermione bit her lip. "Tell him to write me, Ron too."

"I will, and if you find Harry." Dumbledore pulled two small objects out of his sleeve, "give him one of these."

"What are they Professor?" Hermione took the the two objects.

"Have you been following the Quibbler's coverage of Mr. Black?"

"I haven't been reading the Quibbler," Hermione shook her head. "And I don't know who 'Mr. Black' is."

"Mr. Black is a wizard that has been traveling through Europe making life difficult for the dark side," Dumbledore smiled. "These two devices are portable floo connections that were developed by some of Mr. Black's people. I was able to use a bit of influence to acquire these two before they became available to the general public. There is a small instruction manual engraved on the side of the device and I've been told that their appearance will go unnoticed in the Muggle world."

"Thank you Professor," Hermione smiled.

"Thank you Hermione," the Headmaster returned her smile. "If you see Harry, tell him . . . tell him that I am very sorry."

"I will"

IIIIIIII

"We're loosing too many of our readers to that damned rag Lovegood owns," a large fat man waved his arms in a comic fashion. "Does anybody have any idea of how we can regain our shrinking market share and bring our profits back up?"

"We could shift our focus away from gossip and barley substantiated rumor," one of the other men suggested. "Maybe the public's apatite for news has changed since the reappearance of He-Who-Must-Not-Be-Named."

"I like it," the fat man nodded. "The public wants fantasy to get away from the reality of the Dark Lord. It will also cut costs when we fire most of our reporters, who needs reporters when you're just making things up."

Fudge A Monkey?

Our sources reveal that since Fudge's swearing in as Minister of magic, Ministry Potions masters have been receiving regular orders for Polyjuice Potion. This may not seem odd until one points out that Slappy the magical chimp disappeared from his cage the same year that our Minister started Hogwarts. For those that don't remember, Slappy was the chimp that was known to use accidental magic to change the color of his . . . droppings.

AN: I posted chapter 8 in past lives here by mistake, sorry about that it was late at night and I was tired. Lucky thing I caught myself after it went up and I didn't have a lot of reviews asking what the hell happened to this story. Most wizards are about one hundred and fifty years behind the times, the Professor and Henchgirl are a bit more recent but they aren't modern. Dumbledore is evil and manipulative has been done, someone hit him with a clue by four in this story.

Gorgon - The tour guide is 'in' and I would say more but that would ruin a major surprise. Henchgirl and the Professor are not in.

mr spotty – It's an old Hulk quote

yes indeed - Where did I say that Harry was Jewish? Most of what has happened was an accident.

Kitling – It can be translated to mean 'Black.'

kcgal – You got it, and yes he did.

TRAIN TRAIN

"Good bye Professor, Henchgirl." Harry smiled, "thanks for cheering me up, I really . . . I really needed your support."

"Think nothing of it my Friend," the Professor smiled. "Just keep giving us ideas to work on."

"I will," Harry nodded as he turned to walk away.

Harry walked several blocks before stopping and hailing a cab, sometimes he forgot that he didn't have to worry about money like normal people did, it wasn't like he was going to need it in a year or two.

"Where to?" The cab driver didn't even bother to look at his customer.

"Center of town," Harry closed his eyes. "Wake me when we arrive, and take your time I'm in no hurry."

"You got it," the driver nodded. "Anything else?"

"No"

The ride passed in silence, and the driver took several nervous glances at the apparently sleeping man in the backseat of his cab.

"We've stopped," Harry commented, not bothering to open his eyes. "Have we arrived?"

"Yes sir," the driver stared straight ahead. "Do you need anything else?"

"No," Harry handed the man several bills. "Have a good day."

"I will sir," the driver nodded, taking the bills. "You as well."

"Thank you," Harry walked out of the cab and began muttering to himself. "Austria, I think the best place to go now would be Austria."

The cab driver's hands shook as he watched the man leave, he hadn't understood the order from above when they told him to keep an eye out for the frightening man with the unrecognisable face and if he had been in any other line of work then he would have laughed it off and forgotten about it.

The driver calmed his hands and carefully pulled into traffic, the strange man had given him a message to pass and he didn't think that it would be healthy to delay its delivery.

IIIIIIIIII

It did not take long for Harry to find the town's sole magical shop, taking a nervous breath he walked in

"One moment," an old man that Harry presumed to be the shop keeper spoke from the back of the shop. "What can I do for you?"

"I need to find a way to arrange transportation to Austria," Harry managed a weak smile.

"I can arrange something for you," the old man smiled. "But I'm afraid that it might take a bit of time."

"How long?" Harry asked with a sigh.

"Depends," the old man smiled. "Might be best to spend a bit of time looking around my shop, I'm sure that I'll have something ready by the time you want to make your purchases."

"Alright," Harry nodded.

"The best things will be through that doorway," the old man commented. "You might want to start there, the things on display out here are just cheap trinkets for the tourists."

"If you say so," Harry agreed with a shrug. He was beginning to suspect that there wasn't a sane shop keep in the world.

Walking through the indicated doorway, Harry spent several minutes browsing and finally returned to the counter with a small selection of the odd items that he had seen.

"I see that you were able to find some things." The shop keeper looked over the items that Harry had placed on the table, "interesting selection."

"I mostly chose the things that I didn't recognise," Harry admitted with a grin.

"This," the man held up an odd looking blue flag with a golden disk surrounded by a green wreath with red flower, small union jack in the top corner. "I believe that this is the regimental colors for a unit of British Infantry, I'm not sure where it came from and I'm afraid that I can't tell you much about it."

"That's fine," Harry shrugged. "I have a friend that would love figure out where it came from."

"I'm glad. The second item," the shop owner held up a large iron ball. "Is a portable dungeon made for some marquis in france, as a . . . recreational item. It comes with a full assortment of . . . devices, and a full reference library."

"Recreational item?"

"Moving right along," the man picked up a length of chain. "This is a steel whip made of several thousand interlocking rings, it has a large assortment of enchantments that allow a skilled user to do a number astounding stunts."

"Thanks," Harry smiled. "Is my portkey ready yet?"

"Before I answer that, I think that you'll be wanting to buy one of these too." The shop keeper placed a large stein alongside Harry's other purchases.

"What is it?" Harry eyed the strange cup with a large measure of suspicion.

"It's just something to drink beer out of," the old man smiled. "Why?"

"This is a magical shop," Harry took a step back. "And I'm waiting for you to tell me why you're selling something so normal looking in this shop."

"Oh, is that all?" The old man smiled, "now that you mention it, I may have accidentally put a few charms on it so it automatically fills its self from the taps at a few of the local brewery's."

"Oh?" Harry began to relax, "for how long?"

"I'm not exactly sure how long the enchantments will hold up," the old man shrugged after all the things that his cousins were inflicting on the boy, he deserved some sort of compensation. "Few years at least."

"I'll take it," Harry couldn't wait to show it to the twins. "Thank you."

"And since you're getting that," the shop keeper grinned. "You'll have to have one of these."

"One of whats?" Harry closed his eyes and began rubbing his temples.

"An ever full flask," the store owner dropped a large silver flask on the pile. "Fills with your choice of several dozen non magical liquids, just the thing to compliment an ever full stein."

"Ok," Harry nodded. "Is the port . . ."

"And a perfect compliment to the stein and ge mug is this book," the shop keep put out a rather large book. "The single wizard's guide to keeping his witch or witches or pack of veela happy."

"Fine," Harry forced a smile. "Can I have that portkey now?"

"No problem," the shopkeep held out his hand. "The portkey is ready and all that you need to do is pay to on your way."

"One moment," Harry dug out a hand full of coins. "Here you are."

"Thank you," the old man handed back a cloth bag containing Harry's purchases and a small glass bead. "It will activate in three, two, one."

Harry felt the world spin, and the portkey dragged him to his next destination.

"Good afternoon," a man in a strange uniform greeted Harry upon his arrival, "how are you today?"

"I'm fine," Harry began to relax. "How are things in Austria? No attacks or odd occurrences?"

"No sir," replied the now curious customs agent. "Why do you ask?"

"I've been under a lot of stress the last few days and I was hoping to get a chance to relax without being blindsided by all the weirdness that usually inflicts itself on my life."

"I see," the customs agent frowned. "What's in the bag?"

"This," Harry glanced down at the bag containing the items he collected in the odd shop. "Just a few things I picked up in Germany."

"May I have a look?"

"Sure," Harry placed the bag on a convenient table.

The customs agent's eyes widened in astonishment as he took his first look, "you say that you picked these items up in Germany?"

"Yes?" Harry nodded, "is something wrong?"

"No," the man shook his head. "Nothing is wrong, it's just history is a hobby of mine and when I saw the flag . . . could I ask your name?"

"Black," Harry held up his passport.

"That won't be necessary," the agent returned the shopping bag. "And let me be the first to welcome you to Austria, and to wish you good luck and good hunting."

"Thanks?" Harry gave slow nod of acknowledgement, "was there something else you needed?"

"No sir," the agent smiled. "I'm sure that you must be tired from your travels, so why don't you head into town and find a hotel while I go report to my superiors."

"Ok?" Harry walked away from the customs desk and into the rest of the building.

The customs agent smiled as he watched the smooth departure of the mysterious Mr. Black, he pitied the fool that Mr. Black had come to eliminate.

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Stepping out of the customs room, Harry was almost overwhelmed by the amount of people rushing back and forth.

"Excuse me," a young woman spoke up, distracting Harry from the number of people rushing around. "Would you like me to help you arrange transportation?"

"What?" Harry turned to look at the woman, "I'm sorry. I just didn't expect to see that." Harry waved his hands to indicate the scene.

"I understand," the woman nodded. "Vienna is unique in that it is one of the few city's to use a large muggle airport to house its magical in processing center."

"And they don't notice anything odd?"

"For the most part, they're tired, frustrated, and in an unfamiliar place." The girl shrugged, "when I consider all that, I sometimes think that we don't even need to keep up the charms."

"I see," Harry nodded. "Makes sense I suppose, now what was that question you asked me before?"

"Oh," the girl blushed. "I was just asking if you needed me to help you arrange transportation?"

"I might," Harry nodded. "What are my options?"

"Well," the girl smiled. "The first thing you need to do is decide if you want to use Magic or Muggle methods of transportation."

"Muggle I suppose," Harry smiled.

"Ok," the girl nodded. "Do you need any help arranging things in the muggle world?"

"No," Harry shook his head. "I don't believe I'll have any trouble arranging things."

"Then have a nice day sir," the girl smiled cheerfully.

"You as well." Harry smiled, then turned to walk into the airport.

Harry spent a bit of time exploring the airport, marveling at its sights, sounds, and smells. Never before had he experienced something so seemingly chaotic, it was all so new, all so fascinating and before he knew it several hours had passed. Most of which spent watching the planes take off and land. Until, finally noticing the time, and a bit embarrassed at the fact that he had spent the entire day staring at something so common as take offs and landings, Harry began to make his way to the rail station.

"Something to read on the train?" An older gentleman asked holding up a news paper, "Only a Schilling, and well worth it."

"Alright," Harry took a moment to pull out a handful of the appropriate currency. "Thank you."

"Always happy to help a traveler." The old man smiled, despite the fact that he had been born without a significant amount of magic, he still suffered from the family curse, and he was still loyal to the cause. It didn't hurt that it allowed him a chance to make a bit of money of a group of rather dull blood purists, after all who else would be dim enough to go hunting for the infamous Mr. Black. "Here's your change sir, have a good day."

"Thank you," Harry smiled. "I will."

The old man smiled, as he thought of the chaos that he saw coming thanks to his actions, the damage to the Dark Lord's forces would be immense . . . not bad for a squib that wasn't normally good enough to merit the notice of the more uptight members of wizarding society.

Harry had only a short wait before his train arrived and he quickly found a seat in the last car, opening his newspaper to pass the time he soon lost all interest in the world around.

|||||||

"Well?" The rat like man asked nervously.

"After hearing your problem, I think I've found a solution." Replied a young man with a smile, "though I still think it would be best if I were allowed to examine the sight of the accident to make sure that my calculations are correct."

"And it's still impossible to allow that," Wormtail hissed. The Dark Lord hadn't been pleased by the portkey accident that had destroyed the team in Switzerland and had taken his displeasure out on his one minion capable of making international portkeys. "How does it work?"

"It casts a small charm to check the elevation of the target area a few seconds before re-materialization and automatically aborts if the projected landing site is more than ten feet above the ground level." The young man resisted the urge to laugh, "though I must admit that I'm still a bit mystified as to how something like this became necessary."

"I'm not supposed to reveal trade secrets and you know it." Wormtail frowned, at present the portkey maker was too important to alienate, but as soon as he began to suspect something, or three seconds after they acquired another wizard capable of making international portkeys . . .

"Well," the portkey maker spoke, interrupting Wormtail's train of thought. "Don't hesitate to come back if you have any more problems or questions, though for the life of me I still can't understand why a pet shop would need such highly specialized portkeys."

"That's not for you to know," Wormtail tried (and failed) to look menacing, before disappearing with a pop.

Reappearing before a throne in a darkened manner house.

"Well?" The dark figure on the throne hissed.

"I have it master," Wormtail fell to his knees and began kissing the hem of his master's robe.

"Then take it to the strike team," the dark voice replied.

"Yes Master," Wormtail stood and slowly began backing out of the room.

"One more thing Wormtail."

"Yes Master?" The rat like man cowered.

"I want you to accompany the team," the dark voice hissed. "I want a personal report on the mission after your return."

"Yes master," the rat like man whimpered as he fled the room.

Wormtail's look of fear transformed into a superior sneer as he entered the room that had been assigned to the group of death eaters that had been chosen for the task of eliminating Mr. Black.

"Stand up," Wormtail's sneer deepened. "And touch the portkey, you don't want to have to explain to the dark lord why you weren't on the mission he assigned to you and I'm not going to wait for you to ready yourselves."

The assorted Death Eaters all touched the portkey and readied their wands.

Just before the portkey activated, Wormtail smiled. "Mr. Black will die tonight."

The group of Death Munchers appeared in mid air and for one frightening second, Wormtail knew what that last team felt before they met their end. Several Death Eaters cried out in surprise as gravity

exerted its control and drug them to the their fate, which happened to be about one meter below their arrival point.

"Who streaked? Who's the coward in the Dark Lord's army?" Wormtail shouted trying to cover up his own nervousness.

Most of the assorted death eaters ignored the rat, though one or two of the newer recruits looked down at their feet in shame.

"Where are we and where's Black?" The senior Death Eater hissed, "you had better not have made a mistake rat."

"I made no mistakes." Wormtail cowered, forgetting his earlier show of command. "It looks like we're on the tracks for the Hogwart's Express."

"It does doesn't it," the senior grudgingly admitted. "Black must be in the castle, the muggle loving old fool must have put up new wards."

"That's right," Wormtail admitted nervously. "It's not my fault. . ."

The remainder of Wormtail's words were drowned out by the bellow of a trains' horn and the shriek of its breaks. Most of the assorted Death Eaters didn't even have time to scream before they were ground into paste under the lead cars' wheels.

Ahead, Harry looked up from his news paper as he heard the terrible shriek of a trains' breaks off in the distance. Shaking his head, Harry wondered for a second what had happened on the track behind to cause such a sound, then shrugged his shoulders and went back to his newspaper, he'd hear about it if it was anything important.

AN: I wrote Kiloliters last chapter and it was not a mistake, the Professor and Henchgirl are Pure-Bloods. They are trying but they make mistakes, I wasn't sure if Harry would have noticed their mistake and I really don't want to even think about what types of weird measurements there are in the Wizarding world. Grenzschutz Nine is more commonly known as GSG9, and I hear that they are very good at what they do. The Flag is a regiment's colors, belonging to the KGL and I have no idea how it might have ended up in that

shop. If anyone is wondering, the title comes from the chorus of a Japanese song.

Thanks go to everyone on my group for thinking up some the things that made their way into this fic.

TigerLilly1889 – I live in Japan

Zaxxon – At the moment I plan to have him go back to school, don't know if he'll be able to last out the first week though. Mr. Black will be very active in England, the deaths of most of the Dark Lord's forces will be credited to the mysterious Mr. Black.

IT Sleeps

The return of the survivors of the attack on Mr. Black was met by a hall of shocked silence as their assembled brethren. As the assorted death munchers closed in on the two surviving strike team members, one of the survivors let out a long shuttering gasp and expired.

The other wheezed loudly, "it . . . ambush, everyone is dead." After that the man's body gave one long shutter before he too joined his team mates in death.

The assorted death eaters looked at each other in shock, "what are we going to do?" One of the newer members asked.

"You go inform the dark lord of what has happened," one of the more experienced munchers replied, "we'll clean this up."

"Right." The new death eater agreed, wanting to get as far away from the bloodied mess on the ground as he could.

The more experienced death eaters watched the man go with barely concealed smirks, and grins of anticipation.

"WHAT?" The Dark Lord bellowed, "CRUCIO."

"Let's get to work," the experienced death eater motioned towards the mess. "Our master won't be happy and seeing this might give him an excuse to show us how unhappy he is about the situation."

The death eaters moved forward and began lifting up the shattered remains.

"What do we have here?" One of them smirked holding up a concussed rat with a bloody stub where his tail had been, "looks like the master won't be showing us his displeasure after all."

"Heh," another death eater sneered. "Take him into see the master, wouldn't want to keep the dark lord waiting after all."

IIIIIIII

Peter awoke to the frowning face of his master and nearly wet himself when he realised that his years of running from death may be coming to an end.

"Tell me," the Dark Lord's voice was oddly calm. "Tell me what happened to the men that I sent to kill Black."

"I . . . I heard a terrible shriek and saw a bright light," Peter shivered. "I turned into a rat and I felt a pain in my tail, there was a strange sound and I couldn't see anything after the sound went away I saw two of the newer recruits trying to activate the portkey so I crawled over to them."

"I see," the Dark Lord nodded. "Much as it pains me to say it, death will not be your punishment since I still have some use for you. CRUCIO."

"I'm sorry, I'm sorry Master." The rat sobbed, "I'm sorry I failed you."

"You," the dark lord turned away from the rat and towards his last victim. "Have another team readied, tell them to come back successful."

"Yes master," the young death eater sobbed. "I shall do it immediately."

IIIIIIII

"Thank you all for coming," the grizzled looking older man looked around the room. "Many of you have heard rumors about a wizard named Black wandering around Europe making life difficult for blood purists and other assorted bad types."

"Yes sir," one of the men in the crowd nodded. "But what's that have to do with us?"

"Black arrived last night," the older man looked around the room. "And destroyed a Death Eater Hunter Killer team before we even had a chance to set up surveillance."

"How did he do it?"

"We're not sure," the older man admitted with a frown. "The deaths looked like an accident and the bodies were too damaged to make any conclusions."

"So he's still angry about what happened in Germany then?"

"Looks like he's calmed down a bit," the old man held up some pictures that looked like the floor of a slaughter house. "As you can see, whatever he did was messy. But unlike most of the deaths in Germany, this one looked like an accident and my counter parts tell me that he likes to make things look like accidents and coincidences . . . based on his past behavior what happened in Germany was not normal."

"Do we have any idea what set him off?"

"I asked," the old man frowned. "And all I was told is that Mr. Black is very old, and that something terrible happened that brought up memories of a terrible time."

"What terrible time?" One of the younger officers asked.

"The Germans suspect that Mr. Black may have had a hand in liberating the camps," the old man sighed. "And they think that may have been one of the things that set him off."

Several of the younger law enforcement officers shifted uncomfortably in the silence that followed the Commander's last statement.

"How do you want us to act towards Mr. Black?" One of the officers asked, breaking the silence.

"Keep an eye on him and listen to what he says. I'm told that he likes to give advice to the people following him, do not enter his hotel room uninvited, and be polite." The old man smiled, "I'd like to get him in here for a tour of the place and I don't think he'd agree if we weren't polite."

IIIIIIII

Harry spent most of the morning laying in bed and lazing about, after years of waking with the dawn to make breakfast for his 'family' it felt strange to sleep in and spend the day doing nothing, until finally hunger drove him from his bed and towards his suite's telephone to order room service. After his desire for food had been appeased, Harry's eyes darted around the room in search of entertainment. They lingered for a time on the large television in the center of the room before reluctantly moving to his pack and the books within. Hermione would kill him if he spent his entire vacation without doing anything productive, besides it was possible that there could be something within one of the books that would help him live to see his eighteenth birthday . . . snorting at the thought and smiling cynically, Harry pulled out one of the books and began to read.

"Room service," Harry's reading was interrupted by a knock on the door.

"One moment," Harry put his book face down on the the table beside his chair and walked towards the door. "Come in."

"Thank you sir," the hotel's employee looked around the room. "Doing a bit of reading?"

"It's always a good idea to take the time to improve your mind," Harry grinned. "Do you have what I ordered?"

"Right here sir," the man nodded, holding up a tray. "Where do you want me to put it sir?"

"On the table is fine," Harry motioned. "Is there anything else?"

"No sir," the hotel employee shook his head. "Only that the meal and any future meals you chose to have here are compliments of the management."

"Thank you," Harry nodded.

"You are very welcome sir," the man nodded. "So unless you need me for something else?"

"No," Harry shook his head. "I have everything I need."

"Then good day sir."

Harry watched as the man carefully closed the door, the strangeness of the man's actions caused Harry's paranoia to go into overdrive. Eyeing the food with hunger and suspicion, Harry picked up one of the books that he had been reading and began to flip through it until he found the section on poisons.

A wave of his wand and a muttered incantation left Harry feeling a mixture of embarrassment and relief, if he didn't learn to relax then he'd end up like Moody before the summer was up. On the other hand, Moody had lived through several attempts on his life.

"Professor," Harry called into his lighter. "Professor, are you there?"

"No," a female voice answered. "But I am, what do you need Mr. Black?"

"Henchgirl?"

"Yup," the voice giggled. "Can I help you with something?"

"I was wondering if you could develop some sort of item that detects poisons and things," Harry asked quietly. "Might be nice if it did other things too, but something to detect poisons was my first thought."

"Ok," Henchgirl's voice replied. "We'll add something to detect things onto the list, do you need anything else?"

"No," Harry smiled. "Do you?"

"Not at the moment," Henchgirl replied quickly. "But if I think of something, I'll let you know."

"Thank you, good bye."

"Bye."

That taken care of, Harry sat down and began to eat.

IIIIIIIIII

At the same time, the man who had delivered Mr. Black's food was preparing to make a report of his own.

"This is Black Watch calling HQ," the man whispered into his own Zippo. "I have a report on my first meeting with Mr. Black."

"Report," the voice that replied was devoid of emotion.

"I delivered his food and we talked for a few minutes, he was reading when I arrived and he advised me that research was essential to our line of work."

"Did you see what he was reading?"

"No," the agent replied with regret. "Most of the titles were in languages that I couldn't understand."

"I see," the voice replied. "Continue."

"After that I left," the man finished. "I think that he may have performed some sort of detection spell while I was in the hall, but I didn't recognise the magical signature."

"That's also understandable, Mr. Black has a habit of using odd, obscure, and Unknown spells." The voice paused, "it's also understandable that Mr. Black recognised you as something other than a hotel employee when you entered his room. To the best of my knowledge, no one has ever been able to fool him and he keeps his tails until he grows tired of them."

"Got it," the man nodded. "Black Watch signing out."

"HQ signing out."

IIIIIIII

Harry spent the remainder of the day reading books and ordering room service. At the end of the day, Harry finally put up his books and went to sleep with plans for the next day dancing in his head.

Harry awoke late the next morning and sprung out of bed, today was the day that he was going to set his plans into motion. Today was the day that he was going to do something so strange and humiliating that none of his friends at Hogwarts could ever know about it.

Marching down to the front desk, Harry handed over his key.

"Checking out sir?"

"No," Harry shook his head. "I'm going out for the day and I suspect that I might end up doing a bit of drinking and I don't want to lose it."

"I understand sir," the clerk nodded. "We'll have it waiting for you when you return."

"Thank you," Harry nodded. "I'll be back later today, tomorrow at the latest."

"Have a good time sir," the hotel desk clerk waited until his guest was out of sight before calling his superiors. It didn't matter that Black knew he was being watched, it would have been impolite to be blatant about it.

IIIIIIIIII

"Good afternoon sir," a pair of men approached Mr. Black. "How are you today?"

"I'm fine," Harry answered politely. "How are you?"

"Fine," the men nodded. "The two of us work for Magical Law Enforcement and we were wondering if we could ask you a few questions?"

"Sure," Harry shrugged. "Ask away."

"For starters, do you mind if we ask where you're going today?"

"Salzburg," Harry smiled. "I hear that it's a beautiful city and I'd like to go look at a few things."

"It is," one of the men agreed. "Have you arranged transportation yet?"

"Not yet," Harry smiled. "Is there anything you recommend?"

"Well," one of them smiled. "Would you mind accompanying us? We have to go anyway."

"Sure," Harry smiled. "And thank you."

"No problem," the man nodded to his partner who disappeared with a pop. "My partner will be back with a portkey in just a few minutes."

"Thank you," Harry nodded. "It sure was lucky that you happened to be going to Salzburg too."

"Yeah, lucky." The man grinned, resisting the urge to laugh. "So, did you hear about the group of death eaters that they found on the tracks the other day?"

"No," Harry's eyes widened in concern. "What happened? Was anybody hurt?"

"Only the death eaters." The man marveled at Black's performance, if he didn't know any better he would swear that Black had nothing to do with the incident. "Looks like they ported in and were killed by the train, a rather fortunate . . . accident."

"Yeah," Harry nodded in agreement. "It's a good thing they were taken care of before anybody was hurt, lucky thing they were so careless with their arrival point."

"Yeah," the man agreed. "Lucky."

Any further conversation was cut short by the reappearance of the man's partner.

"I've got the portkey," the man smiled waving an old shoe. "Grab hold so we can be on our way."

"Where to now Mr. Black?" One of the Austrian Law Enforcement Agents asked with a smile.

"Well," Harry paused. "First, there's something I'd like to do in the hills. After that, I'm planning to have a bit of fun."

"Alright," the man nodded. "Let's go."

The three men spent most of the trip out of time in deep conversation about a wide array of topics, from the insurrection in England to the odd way death eaters kept dieing in accidents.

"Here we are," one of the Officers smiled. "About the most isolated place you can get to this close to town, the wards keep folks from noticing this place and spoiling the natural beauty."

"Thanks," Harry smiled. "I really appreciate the fact that you two took the time to take me here."

"Not a problem Mr. Black," the second Officer replied, "we're happy to provide the company."

"I've gotta go do something," Harry smiled. "I'll be right back."

"Have fun," the Officer smirked.

"I will," Harry replied innocently as he began to walk away.

Harry walked around the nearest hill and found himself in a small draw, and after taking a moment to look around to insure that he wasn't being followed he cleared his voice and began to sing.

"The hills are alive, and they're eating people," he choked off a laugh. He had wanted to do that since his primary school class had watched 'The Sound of Music.' "I just hope they never find out about this." Harry mumbled, his dorm mates would never let him forget it if they learned about it, and who knew what sort of twisted thing Snape would do. No, it was better that this all remained his little secret.

"Did you hear that," one of the hidden officers whispered to the other. "IT might be breaking loose."

"I heard," the other man's voice was grim. "I'd love to know how he knew that IT even exists though."

"Let's get back to the trail," the other whispered back in reply. "I've been told that Mr. Black likes to maintain the illusion that he doesn't notice the way people follow him."

The two men stood and reached the trail only moments before Harry's return.

"Thanks for waiting," Harry smiled. "I just had to get something out of my system."

"No problem," one of the Officers smiled, "though I'm afraid that we'll have to leave your company after we get to town."

"Oh," Harry asked with a raised eyebrow. "Did something come up?"

"Yes," the Officer agreed, "something came up that we need to deal with right away."

"Good luck with that then," Harry smiled.

"Thanks," the Officers nodded. "Let's get back to town."

The three men returned to Salzburg and the two Law Enforcement Officers bid Harry a fond farewell, leaving Harry to plan the remainder of the day's activities alone.

"Excuse me"

Harry turned to look at the two buxom blond backpackers that had just addressed him. "Yes?"

"You wouldn't happen to know where the 'Sound of Music' tour is, would you?"

"I'm afraid not," Harry shook his head. "But it sounds interesting, would you mind if I join you?"

"Not at all," the two Swedish backpackers grinned. "Let's go."

It did not take long for Harry and his two companions to find and join the tour and the three of them spent the next several hours visiting the places that the film was filmed in the company of a drunken singing group of fellow backpackers.

They ended the night in a hostel called the Yoho drinking pints of beer and listening to the 'Sound of Music' play on the television. Harry's last memory before everything went black was of doing a layback under the tap while watching a large and rather fat German dance on one of the tables while wearing a pink latex body suit and matching tutu.

IIIIIIII

"Sir," one of the law Enforcement Officers that had been escorting Mr. Black burst into their superior's office, "the wards holding IT are starting to unravel."

"What?" The old man's eyebrows shot up, "explain."

"We were talking to Mr. Black and he indicated that he wanted to take a stroll in the hills to take care of something," the Officer began. "When we got there, he went off on his own."

"And?"

"We observed him check the wards, then he called out that IT was going to start eating people." The Officer frowned, "we met up with Mr. Black and he claimed that he had gone off to answer the call of nature."

"He likes to play innocent," the old man waved his hand in dismissal. "What happened next?"

"We accompanied Mr. Black back to Salzburg and watched him leave with a pair of attractive young Swedish backpackers." The Officer grinned, "then we alerted everyone we could in Salzburg and went back to the prison."

"Go on," the old man struggled to remain calm.

"It took the specialists three hours to find the weak point in the wards," the Officer shook his head in wonder. "It took a team of twelve experts three hours to find something that Mr. Black discovered in thirty seconds. Turns out that someone has been weakening the portions that control the alarms, once those were gone they would have been able to release IT at their leisure."

"I trust every thing's been taken care of?"

"Yes sir, everything been taken care of and there's an investigation to find out how the wards could have been breached."

"Good," the old man nodded. "Though I do wonder how Black knew about IT."

"I did too sir, so I looked at the records." The Officer licked his lips nervously, "as you know there were thirteen survivors from the group that battled and defeated IT."

"And?"

"Twelve of them were recorded by name," the Officer paused. "And the thirteenth . . . the thirteenth was recorded as the unknown wizard in black."

"I see," the old man exhaled, "the Germans said he was old and the Italians said he was even older."

"Sir?"

"The Italians think that he's been around for at least two thousand years," the old man chuckled. "Would explain how he does what he can do."

"I guess it would sir."

AN: Another part down, Harry has a bit more fun in Austria and then it's off to Hungary.

One thousand years ago:

"Thank you for helping us defeat IT," the Wizard addressed the stranger. "Before you go, won't you at least give us your name?"

"Names are unimportant," the wizard in a dark robe replied. "I only did what any would have done if they found themselves in the same situation."

"Then farewell stranger," the Wizard nodded. "Know that you will always be welcome in these lands."

"Thank you . . . friend." The wizard smiled, then jumped on his horse and rode into the sunset. Why oh Why had his parents given him a name like Theodoric the Accident.

Happy Early Birthday Neville

Harry's mouth tasted like a men's room floor and his head felt like it had been used as an anvil by a town full of blacksmiths.

Groaning in pain, he forced himself to stand up and immediately regretted it. Taking a few stumbling steps towards the door, Harry managed to find his way out of the building where he had awoken.

Harry spent several minutes stumbling through the streets before a cab driver took pity on him and pulled over.

"You look like you need a ride somewhere," the driver smirked.

"Yeah," Harry agreed. "Just take me anywhere that I can catch a ride to Vienna."

"Heh, you got it." The cabby watched his customer through his rear view mirror, "rough night?"

"You could say that," Harry agreed. "I just wish I remembered what happened after my tenth drink."

"We've all had nights like that," the cab driver sympathised. "Just close your eyes and I'll wake you when we get where we're going."

"Thank you." Harry nodded, taking the cab driver's advice.

Took Harry several agonizing hours to get back to his Hotel, and when he arrived he found one of two Magical Law Enforcement Agents that had escorted him to Salzburg waiting for him.

"Good day Mr. Black," the Agent smiled. "How are you today."

"Bit tired," Harry gave a tight lipped grin. "I had a rather . . . eventful night."

"I'm sure," the Agent smiled. "I came by to give you an invitation to tour the National Headquarters for Magical Law Enforcement, can I tell my superior's that you accept."

"One second," Harry glanced down at his watch. "Can you come back in a few hours? I really need a chance to get some rest first."

"Of course," the Agent nodded. "I'll be waiting in the lobby in three hours."

Harry glanced down at his watch, "four would be better."

"Yes sir," the man agreed. "I'll be back in four hours to get you."

"Fine," Harry nodded. "Good bye."

"Good bye Mr. Black," the Agent replied before disappearing with a pop.

Harry groaned as he shambled his way towards the elevator, sleep and a hand full of pain killers awaited.

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"Is everything ready?" The Dark Lord asked in a dangerously calm tone.

"We're just waiting for the portkeys to be finished my Lord." The death eater simpered, "as soon as it's ready then we'll be able to strike."

"Excellent," the Dark Lord purred. "Black will soon draw his last breath."

"Yes Master," the flunky agreed.

"CRUCIO, Bwahahahahahahahahaha." The Dark Lord grinned, he loved his life.

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Harry awoke and spent several minutes staring at the ceiling before he managed to gather up the motivation required to get out of bed. Stumbling around his room, he managed to dress himself and was soon on his way to his meeting in the lobby.

"Are you ready to go Mr. Black?" The agent asked as Harry stepped off the elevator.

"Yeah," Harry nodded. "You got a portkey?"

"Right here sir." The agent nodded, holding out a piece of paper. "And it should go off in three, two, one."

"Is this the place?" Harry asked, mentally noting that hangovers made travel by portkey a lot more . . . exciting than was normally the case.

"Yes sir," the agent nodded. "We're currently in the lobby of the main headquarters building."

"Nice," Harry nodded as he examined the wards. "They look fairly comprehensive, I wouldn't want to try to get through those after they've been completed."

"After they've been completed sir?" The agent asked with a look of confusion.

"Hmm," Harry didn't bother to halt his examination. "Oh, the wards. The completed sections look like they would provide a lot of protection, the incomplete sections look like they wouldn't stop a group of determined first years. I must admit that the quick patches that you've thrown over them look fairly impressive, doubt most people would notice that they weren't more than cosmetic."

"I see sir," the agent laughed nervously. "How did you notice that the patches were ineffective?"

"Wrong color," Harry shook his head. "They stood out like a sore thumb, bet it's difficult to spot them in black and white though."

"Yes sir," the agent agreed. "Almost impossible."

"Thanks for allowing me the time to look at this," Harry motioned towards the building. "What's next on the agenda?"

"Um," the agent took a moment to reboot his thought processes. "A tour of the holding areas sir."

"Could we hold that off until I get a bit of food?" Harry glanced down at his watch, "or some coffee?"

"Of course sir," the agent nodded. "Would you be willing to eat at the on site cantina?"

"Sure," Harry nodded. "Sorry to put you through so much trouble, but I haven't eaten anything today and I just realised how hungry I am."

"As I said before, it is not a problem sir." The agent smiled reassuringly, "right this way sir."

Harry followed the other man through a dizzying array of passages until finally they reached their destination.

"I'm afraid that we don't have much available right now," the agent frowned. "But I'm sure that we can find something."

"Anything is fine," Harry nodded. "I just gotta get something in my stomach."

"Then wait here," the agent motioned towards a table. "And I'll go talk to the cooks."

"Thank you," Harry sat down.

"It's not a problem sir." The agent nodded, before rushing off, returning a few minutes later with a sandwich and a couple cups of coffee.

"Thanks," Harry nodded reaching for a sandwich.

"As I was saying before," the agent began. "Our holding areas are state of the art, each one comes equipped with magic dampening fields, high gravity, and one way wards."

"How do they work?" Harry asked making polite conversation.

"The magic dampening fields are self explanatory, but we've managed to include some improvements that you might not be aware of." The agent said enthusiastically, "we've constructed them so that

their drain will render all forms of magical transportation ineffective. The high gravity or HG will make it difficult for them to move and we hope that it will also have a negative effect on magic. Finally, the one way wards will allow people to enter but will prevent them from leaving. We included that so that we can lose the dampening fields and still not have to worry about a mass escape."

"Fascinating," Harry tried and failed to pretend interest.

"When would you like to see the holding areas Mr. Black?" The agent asked taking a sip of coffee.

Harry looked down at his half eaten sandwich, talk about the prison had killed his appetite. "now is fine."

"Then let's go sir," the agent jumped up and took Harry through another maze of passages.

"Is there some reason that you chose to use traditional bars?" Harry asked with a bored expression as he stared into the cell.

"Is there another way to do things sir?" The agent asked eagerly.

"I don't know," Harry shrugged, "I suppose you could use some sort of unbreakable glass or . . ." Harry blinked in shock at the dozen death eaters that had just ported into one of the empty cells.

"DIE BLACK," a dull orange light shot out of one of the death eater's wands and dissipated only centimeters in front of Harry's nose.

"Wow, you guys are good." Harry smirked at the trapped Death Eaters, "though you might want to tell your men to take their wands before you put them into their cell next time."

"Yes sir," the agent nodded weakly.

"Don't think I don't appreciate the demonstration you decided to hold for me," Harry laughed. "Now I know why you wanted me to inspect the holding cells so badly. I love the way you had these 'death eaters' port in at just the right moment and cast a spell at me that just

happened to dissipate, effectively showing how effective your new wards are."

"Yes sir," the agent nodded dumbly.

"Do you do this for all the tours?" Harry smiled, "if not then thanks for going all out and doing it for me. Gosh, this is great."

"If you say so sir," the agent nodded. "Could you wait outside for a moment?"

"Of course," Harry nodded. "Again, great show, pass my compliments to your boss."

"I will sir," the agent nodded. "I will."

Harry smiled as he left the room, getting a few Aurors to dress up like death eaters and port in at just the right moment was sheer genius. It really showed the effectiveness of the wards and it really made one feel special to think that they had gone to all that trouble just to make their tour feel special.

The Austrian Law Enforcement Agent stared dumbly for several more seconds before he pulled out his new lighter and called his boss.

"What is it?" The grumpy voice of the Head of Magical Law Enforcement asked. "I was up all night dealing with investigation of the wards around IT, so it had better be important."

"Several Death Eaters just ported into the new holding cells sir," the agent resisted the urge to giggle nervously. "Mr. Black wanted me to send along his thanks for such a memorable demonstration of the new ward's effectiveness."

"WHAT?" The Chief's voice asked, no longer showing any fatigue. "If this is a joke . . ."

"I think it might be sir," the agent giggled nervously. "But not the part about having a group of death eaters port in, that's real."

"I see," the Chief took a deep breath. "They said that Black had an odd sense of humor, I have a team on the way. Take Black on the rest of the tour and don't let him have the satisfaction of showing any more surprise, reacting to his little pranks will only encourage him to do more of them . . . and I'm not sure if we could survive more of Black's little jokes."

"Yes sir," the agent nodded dumbly. "I'll go show Black the firing range next."

"You do that," the Chief agreed. "I'm out."

The agent carefully replaced his lighter in it's hidden pocket and walked out the room to meet the still grinning Mr. Black.

"Would you like to see the firing range now sir?" The agent asked, managing to regain his professionalism.

"Sure," Harry nodded. "Let's go."

"Right this way sir," the agent started walking. "The firing range allows us to practice the more . . . destructive spells in our inventory without causing any accidental damage. The back wall is composed of several Iron sheets and nearly three feet of stone. As an added precaution, it has also been charmed for toughness and to self repair."

"Sounds interesting," Harry nodded. "How often do you practice?"

"Department policy states that field personnel must practice weekly, and in the case of our more 'elite' sections daily. While deck workers must practice monthly or bi-monthly. In practice, most people head in for an hour of practice before or after work everyday. You'd be surprised at how relaxing it is to blow large things into small chunks."

"Sounds great," Harry nodded in agreement.

"It is," the agent nodded. "And here we are, would you care to test it out?"

"I'd love to," Harry nodded. "What do I do?"

"Stand on the yellow line," the man indicated a line that bisected the large room. "And call target, a large chunk of stone will come out of the floor, if you prefer wood then call wood target, and if you want to test your accuracy then call out bulls eye."

"That's all?" Harry asked walking towards the line.

"That's all," The agent confirmed, "have fun."

"What spell should I use?" Harry smiled, pulling out his snub nosed wand.

"How about something powerful?" The agent suggested, wanting to see just what kind of spells Mr. Black could use. "Interesting wand."

"A friend of mine made it for me," Harry commented as he searched his mind for the right spell to start out with. "It measures .38 inches in diameter, and it's very special."

"I imagine, bit smaller than normal though." The agent nodded. "Does it's size effect it's pow . . ." the agent trailed off as a massive black sphere shot out of the tip of the wand and obliterated the target, and a good section of the wall behind it. "What was that?"

"Hmm?" Harry turned his head, "just a bit of Russian battle magic. What it lacks in finesse, it makes up in sheer destruction."

"I see," the agent struggled to keep his composure. "Interesting spell, would you like to move on to the last part of the tour or would you like to get in a bit more practice?"

"Might as well move on," Harry shrugged. "Though it was great to use your firing range, I'll have to get one of my own someday."

"Quite." The agent smiled, he was starting to understand Black's sense of humor. "The last section is the memorial wall, it has the name of every agent that has lost their life while on duty."

"I see," Harry nodded becoming solemn. "Let me go pay my respects and then we can go back to my hotel, I don't think I'll be in the mood to talk after seeing that."

"I understand," the agent nodded. "The wall is right this way."

Harry spent several minutes staring at the names and wondering if there might be something similar in Britain that he might be able to look at, "may they rest in peace."

"Absent companions," the agent agreed handing Harry a bit of string. "It will activate when you say the word 'hotel.' It was a pleasure having you here Mr. Black."

"It was a pleasure coming," Harry nodded. "Hotel."

Harry arrived in the lobby of his hotel and immediately walked into the elevator. After pressing the button for his floor, he closed his eyes and began to wait. Moments before reaching his floor, he heard a faint sound that sounded suspiciously like 'dieeeeeeeee.' Opening his eyes, he looked around the closed suspiciously and assured himself that he was still alone and it had all been his imagination.

Below him, the second group of death eaters had fallen to their death in the elevator shaft. They would not be found until the smell alerted the authority's that something was wrong.

IIIIIIII

"Report," the Chief of Magical Law Enforcement ordered.

"Yes sir," the agent that had escorted Harry around the building agreed. "When Black arrived, he asked about the wards and commented that there were several holes in them that would allow entry by even half trained foes. I offered to show him the prison and he declined, saying that he wanted to get something to eat first. We went to the cantina and chatted about the some of the new advances that were made to the wards around the holding cells, Black checked his watch and suggested that we go see them. I might also note that Black's apatite vanished after looking at his watch and he left half of his sandwich. We went to the cells and a group of death eaters ported in, Black didn't even blink when one of them cast a spell at him."

"So it looks like he was expecting them," the Chief chuckled. "And if we asked him, I'm sure he'd note that it was such an odd coincidence that a group of half trained death eaters arrived right after he mentioned that our wards were so thin."

"Do you think he arranged to have them port in sir?" The agent asked with a look of shock.

"No," the older man shook his head. "Our questioning has shown that they were ordered to go on this mission by the Dark Tosser himself, I doubt that Black has the pull to arrange things like that. On the other hand, I find it very likely that he has spies in the ranks of the Death Eaters who told him the time that the attack was going to come."

"I understand sir," the agent nodded. "After that, we went to the firing range and Black vaporized one of the targets with an unknown spell. He mentioned that it was Russian Battle magic, but none of the identifying spells managed to get anything."

"What did they get?"

"Nothing sir," the agent shook his head. "And the forensics team that we sent in afterwards couldn't even find evidence that there had been any magic used."

"Interesting," the older man nodded. "Go on."

"After that, we visited the memorial to the fallen and Black left."

"I see," the older man nodded. "We really need to find a way to thank Black. I want a dozen teams sweeping my office and the minister's office for bugs."

"Yes sir, why sir?"

"I've been arguing with the Minister that we needed the funds to finish our wards for months," the old man snorted. "And he's been telling me that there was no need and that the temporary wards would have to do, he's also been wondering about the expense of the new cells and if we really even need them. Imagine the look on his face when I tell him that a team of Death Eaters managed to break through his

'good enough' wards and it was only the fact that Mr. Black happened to be there that they were subdued. I can't wait to add that the useless and expensive holding cells proved to be vital in the suppression and that if it weren't for them and Black, then a dozen blood thirsty dark wizards would be in the center of the Law Enforcement building with only a few clerks between them and the secure link to the Minister's office."

"You're going to tell him that they were after him?" The agent fought hard to suppress his laughter.

"I might hint that they were on an assassination mission and that Ministry policy prevented us from naming their intended target." The old man gave an evil grin, "sometimes I love my job."

IIIIIIII

"CRUCIO, CRUCIO, CRUCIO, CRUCIO, CRUCIOOOOOOOOOO." The Dark Lord was not happy, and when the Dark Lord wasn't happy he tended to spread it around. "What do you mean the two teams we sent after Black have disappeared? CRUCIO."

"I'm sorry master," Wormtail wet himself again. "Black must have been too powerful."

"POWERFUL? I'LL SHOW HIM POWERFUL." The Dark Lord Screamed. "BELLA, take your husband and brother in law and show him what it means to anger the Dark Lord. I want him begging for death."

"Yes my Lord," the insane woman smiled. "Thy will be done."

IIIIIIII

Harry had about an hour lazing around his room when he decided to get something to drink. Grabbing a handful of loose change from the table next to his bed, he walked out of his room and down the hall to the drink machine.

Feeding several coins into the slot, he was rewarded with several cans of his favorite beverage. As he was walking away, he heard a

terrible thumping sound from the machine behind him. Forcing himself not to turn around, Harry walked slowly back to his room and picked up his phone to call the front desk.

"Front Desk?" Harry kept his voice calm, "this is Black, I think there might be something wrong with the drink machine down the hall from my room. I heard it make a terrible sound after I got my drinks."

Hanging up the phone, Harry opened his drink and took a sip. Things were looking up, nothing strange had happened to him since he had come to Austria and the front desk had assured him that drink machines occasionally made odd noises, and that they would send someone to check on it anyway.

Down the hall, the drink machine continued to leak blood, the Lestranges were no more.

AN: IT is some nameless evil that won't affect the story thanks to the actions of Mr. Black. The idea for IT was that either some dark lord (or lady) in the past was so evil that they refused to say his name, or some sort of great Lovecraft Horror. I'm leaning towards the nameless horror. Someone mentioned that they expected to see the Law Enforcement Officers get annoyed by Black telling them how to do their jobs. Think of it this way, you're a high school athlete and an Olympic class athlete stops by your practice and gives you a couple tips. Are you annoyed that he's telling you how to do your job? If you're wondering, the coin that held the charm that allowed the death eaters to track Harry was used to buy soda. The Lestranges all ported into a small confined space, remember that the portkey was built by someone that wanted to kill Death Eaters and so it didn't have any of the safety charms that might be on a normal portkey.

Thanks go to everyone in my group for giving me a lot of ideas that are making their way into this fic.

Back on the Home Front

"Yes?" The old woman peered suspiciously from the crack of a partially opened door.

"Mrs. Longbottom?" A man in oddly formal robes asked. "My name is Hans Schisler, I'm the Legal Officer to the Austrian Embassy and I have a gift for you and your grandson."

"I suppose that you can prove that you are who you say you are and that this isn't a trick to kill my grandson?" The old woman palmed her wand, "it was a very near thing in the last war and I'm not going to allow another chance at him."

"I understand Madame," the man handed over some official paperwork. "I'm also willing to hand over my wand for the duration of our meeting should that be a requirement to have a meeting."

"That won't be necessary," the old woman stepped back and opened the door to allow entrance, "please come in."

"Thank you ma'am." the man nodded, holding out a large brown envelope. "On behalf of the Nation of Austria and its Magical Citizens, I am pleased to present this to you on behalf of your grandson."

"What are these?" Neville's gran asked with a frown as she examined the contents of the envelope. "They look like photos of a bunch of Aurors mopping up a puddle of red paint."

"Forensics have determined that the 'red paint' in those photos are all that remains of the Lestranges." The wizard grinned, "I wish that my department could take the credit but I'm afraid that all we did was the clean up."

"You're certain that they're dead?" The woman's hands began to shake, "please tell me that you are absolutely certain."

"One hundred percent sure," Hans nodded. "They are dead, the monsters that did such terrible things to your family have been eliminated."

"Thank you," the old woman refused to take her eyes off the gruesome photos. "Who did this?"

"They were the fourth team of death eaters sent to kill a man named Black during his visit to Austria," Hans fought to keep his expression neutral. "One of them he captured and turned over to Magical Law Enforcement and the two others he eliminated in less . . . creative ways, for some reason he seems to have been annoyed at the Lestranges."

"Black?" The old woman paused, "that was Bellatrix's maiden name. Why would a Black want to do . . . something like this to one of their own?"

"This Black may not be related," Hans shrugged. "Reports say that he's killed a number of Death Eaters around Europe, he also virtually eliminated Germany's blood purists."

"I see," the old woman nodded. "I suppose that it could also be a man who likes to follow the old customs."

"What customs would those be?"

"Bellatrix was like a mad dog," the old woman's face twisted into a smile. "And it's said that it's a man's responsibility to shoot his own dog, one does not abandon that responsibility to someone else, it's not something that should be 'farmed out.' Some families used to believe the same, that it was their responsibility to kill any one of their members went on a rampage."

"I wouldn't be surprised if your idea had merit Ma'am," Hans nodded respectfully. "Rumor has it that Mr. Black is old . . . very old."

"I see," the old woman nodded. "If you'll excuse me, I'm afraid that there are matters that I must attend to personally . . ."

"And I really must be getting back to the embassy," Hans nodded taking the hint. "Goodbye Madame, may fortune smile upon your house."

"Thank you," Neville's gran escorted the man to the door and watched him leave. She then turned and walked back into the house and threw a handful of floo powder into her fireplace. "Alastor, I need to speak with you."

"What is it Augusta?" The scarred man's face came into view, "do you need something?"

"They're dead," the old woman's face lit up. "All three of them are dead."

"What happened?" Moody's face became expressionless, "did you do something?"

"No," the smile refused to leave her face. "The went up against a wizard named Black and he killed them all, a representative from the Austrian Embassy brought me pictures."

"Black?" Moody's eyebrows shot up, "Could you show me those pictures?"

"If you like," the woman agreed. "But I'm going to want them back, I'm thinking of having them framed."

"It's not healthy to live in the past like this Augusta," Moody sighed.

"I could say the same thing to you Alastor," the old woman retorted. "Take the photos, but bring them back."

"I will Augusta," Moody nodded taking the envelope.

"Goodbye Alastor"

"Goodbye Augusta," Moody stepped away from the fire and spent several moments looking through the photographs. "Guess he was feeling creative," Moody mumbled to himself.

Any further thoughts were cut short by another face in the fireplace. "Moody, are you there?" Remus's asked cautiously.

"I'm here," the old Auror confirmed. "What do you need?"

"We've got an emergency meeting," the werewolf replied calmly. "Snape has something that he wants to share."

"Alright," Moody nodded. "If you'll get your head out of my fireplace, then I'll be right there."

Moody stepped through the fireplace and let his roving eye search for threats, "what's all this about then."

"Severus has something he'd like to tell us," Dumbledore smiled. "With your permission, I'd like to hear it."

"Fine," Moody took a seat.

"Severus?" Dumbledore smiled.

"The Lestranges have disappeared," Snape didn't bother to stand up. "The Dark Lord is furious and he's been taking it out on the new recruits."

Moody began to chuckle, "bet it's not what they expected when they joined up."

"Alastor please," Dumbledore tried to diffuse the situation. "This is important, we have to start investigating . . ."

"Don't bother," Moody interrupted. "They're dead."

"Are you sure?" Dumbledore lost his grandfatherly look and became dead serious.

"Sure as I can be with the information I have right now," Moody opened the envelope and dropped a couple of the photographs on the table. "This is what they look like now."

"What happened?" Dumbledore stared at the photos in horrified shock.

"Black," Moody replied calmly. "They went after him, and my guess is that he wasn't too happy about that."

"I see," Dumbledore nodded. "Do you know where Mr. Black is right now?"

"I have a pretty good idea," Moody nodded. "Why?"

"I'd like you to get a look at him, maybe even talk to him." Dumbledore gestured down at the photographs, "I don't like knowing so little about a man that's capable of doing this."

"I can't," Moody held up his hand. "I said can't not won't, I was talking to a friend in the Austrian Ministry last night. I wanted to get an idea of what was happening and my friend wouldn't tell me a thing, I've known her for forty years and the only thing I learned was that Black did something for them that put them in their debt."

"Do you have any idea what that might have been?" Molly asked with a thoughtful frown.

"I have an idea," Moody nodded. "But it's not something I can share with any of you, if you know then you know why, and if you don't then it's better you never know."

"Thank you Alastor," Dumbledore spoke up. "Does anyone else have anything to add?"

IIIIIIII

"LUNA"

"FATHER"

"LUNA"

"FATHER"

"LUNA"

"FATHER"

"LUNA"

"FATHER"

"LUNA"

"FATHER"

"LUNA"

"FATHER"

"LUNA"

"FATHER"

"LUNA"

"FATHER"

"LU . . . I'm sorry, but it's just not the same without the ducks."

"I'm sorry Father," Luna patted his arm sympathetically. "But you know that the man at the shop won't sell us any more since the . . . incident."

"I suppose," he sighed. "Maybe if we were to get some geese?"

"He told me that he won't sell any geese either," Luna frowned. "Some people are just so narrow minded sometimes."

"I know, and that's why I have another assignment for you."

"What is it Father?" Luna perked up, "did you finally get the location of the great missing sock depository? Or evidence of the underpants gnomes?"

"No, nothing so important I'm afraid." Luna's father shook his head, "I want you to do a few more human interest stories on Mr. Black."

"But father," Luna protested. "I wanted a chance to report some real news."

"I know dear," her father nodded. "But I'm afraid that I don't have any real news to report, and these human interest stories on Mr. Black have been quite popular."

"What did he do now Father?" Luna tried to look on the bright side, "did he discover evidence that another species exists?"

"I'm afraid not," Luna's father shook his head. "Just few groups of Death Eaters in Austria."

"I'll get right on it Father," Luna nodded. "Maybe if we got a picture of a duck?"

"I'm afraid that we wouldn't be able to pull off the big dance number at the end then," he sighed. "But I'm sure we'll think of something."

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"Ambushed and killed you say?" The man behind the counter at the portkey shop asked with a frown, "I'm afraid that your warranty doesn't cover that."

"The Dark Lord begs to differ," one of the younger death eaters tried to threaten.

"Really?" The nerdy looking man fought hard to suppress his laughter, "well I suppose that if the Dark Lord begs then it would be rude to disagree."

"That's right," the death eater nodded. "People who disagree tend to . . . disappear."

"Only . . ."

"Only what?"

"I thought you people worked for the ministry?" The portkey seller was having the time of his life, "that's what you told me anyway."

"Um . . ." the death eater stammered, "we do. The Minister likes it when we refer to him as . . . snark board?"

"Snark board?" The portkey seller frowned, looked like all the deaths was effecting the quality of the recruits. "I could have sworn you said dark lord."

"No, you must have misheard me." The death eater looked smug, "I said snark board."

"Ok," the portkey seller shrugged. "Why was there an ambush if you work for the ministry?"

"Because . . ." the death eater stopped to think, things were so hard now that the inner circle had been reduced. "That's a ministry code word for accident?"

"Oh," the portkey seller nodded. "If it was an accident then your warranty is valid, do you have a receipt?"

"Receipt?" The death eater asked, "what receipt?"

"You need a receipt to get a full warranty," the shop keep explained. "Unless of course you're willing to take store credit?"

"Um, yeah store credit."

"Ok," the shop keeper nodded. "I had some experimental charms I wanted to try anyway."

"What experimental charms?" The death eater asked suspiciously.

"Oh, just a few charms I whipped up to keep you from dieing in another bizarre and improbable accident."

"Oh," the death eater nodded. "That's alright then."

IIIIIIII

"Just take him the letter Hedwig," Hermione pleaded. "You saw me write it, so you know it doesn't have any tracking spells."

The owl hooted sadly, but refused to move.

"Come on Hedwig," Hermion

e tried to reason with the bird. "I just want him to know that I'm worried about him and Ron said that none of the other owls could find him, I know you could do it."

The owl gave another melancholy hoot.

"I'm sorry Hedwig," Hermione began stroking the owl's feathers. "I didn't mean to imply that I thought you were deliberately shirking your responsibilities, I'm just worried about Harry and it's making me say inconsiderate things."

The owl gave a slightly less depressed sounding hoot.

"Why don't we do some reading?" Hermione suggested, "I've got several new books on charms and defence against the dark arts. Why don't we look over those to see if there might be something we can use to help Harry when he comes back?"

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Harry woke up late the next morning and started to pack, Austria was great and nothing odd or dangerous had happened but he was starting to think that it was time to move on. While staying in one place for the remainder of his vacation was tempting, he couldn't force himself to stay when there were still new places to see and things to do. After all, it wasn't like he was going to have an opportunity to do this later in life. Shouldering his pack, Harry took one last look around the room and smiled. It was nice to have a chance to relax and enjoy the peace for a change, he had no doubt that his next destination would not be so sedate . . . ah well, he could still hope for the best.

AN: I almost had Voldie send in several teams after the Lestranges, so that the drink machine would explode and when Law Enforcement arrives, they find a hall full of dead death eaters, but I decided that enough was enough. This chapter was mostly to give an update on what's been happening to everyone else back in England, enjoy or don't. Harry's next destination is Hungary.

Hungarian Horntails

"If I've told you once I've told you a thousand times," the Professor shouted as he and his assistant walked out of their hanger. "Pink is not a good color for our Zeppelin."

"But I like Pink," Henggirl shouted back. "And if I can't have pink then I want green."

"There will be no . . ." The Professor's tirade was cut off by the sound of several people clearing their throats, "what do you want?"

"We just wanted to . . . discuss the fact that you've decided to use Tesla Disk Turbines to power that dirigible of yours." The figure brandished a large pipe menacingly, "we think it might be a good idea if you were to rethink that."

"Yeah," one of the other figures agreed. "People who power dirigibles with Tesla Disk Turbines suffer accidents around here."

"My good fellows," the Professor began somewhat annoyed that his argument with his henchgirl had been interrupted. "I would never dream of powering a dirigible with a Tesla Disk Turbine, why the very idea is pure insanity."

"Then what do you have in that hanger?" The first figure asked sarcastically, "sure looks like a dirigible to me."

"Ah, a common mistake." The Professor nodded, "that's not a dirigible. It's a zeppelin."

"Oh," the first figure nodded. "Then we have no beef with you, unless . . ."

"Unless?" Henggirl echoed.

"Unless you're planning to arm it with STEN guns," the second figure finished. "If you are . . ."

"Why would we do something as silly as that?" Henggirl was appalled, "what do you take us for?"

"We're sorry for the mix up," the first figure gave an unseen smile. "Good luck with your zeppelin."

"Thank you," the Professor and Henggirl replied.

"What pleasant fellows," the Professor remarked.

"I thought so," Henggirl agreed. "Now as I was saying, if I can't have pink then I want green."

"You will get no such thing," the Professor shouted. "Silver is what zeppelins were and silver is what ours shall be."

|||||||

Harry walked out of his hotel and spent several hours wandering around the magical sections of Vienna before wanderlust forced him to find a place to purchase transportation to his next destination.

"Good afternoon," the shopkeeper nodded. "What can I do for you?"

"I was hoping to get a portkey to Hungary," Harry shrugged. "I was told that I might be able to get something here."

"I'm afraid that arranging a portkey to Hungary is quite impossible," the shopkeeper held up his hand. "Not because I am trying to withhold it, but because of the protections that the Hungarians have raised around their country."

"What happened?" Harry made himself comfortable.

"As you may know, Hungary is a country that has suffered many trials." The shopkeeper sighed, "after the first great war the Muggle powers decided to slice it into several smaller nations as punishment for having the poor luck of choosing the losing side."

"What does that have to do with today?" Harry asked with a curious frown.

"A cabal of wizards managed to get word of the impending shift and decided to do what they could to save as much of their territory as they possibly could." The shopkeeper gave an evil smile, "all was going well for the mostly French teams of wizards that were involved in shifting the borders and collecting war reparations until one day a team ported in and found themselves far off the mark."

"I know the feeling of having to adjust to a bad port," Harry nodded. "It's not pleasant."

"What was worse," the old shopkeeper smirked. "Was that they could not get any form of magical transportation to work. It seems that a group of wizards calling themselves the Búbajos-brigades had put up wards around their remaining borders sealing them from any means of magical transportation."

"What happened next?" Harry leaned forward, "I have a hard time believing that the various wizarding governments would just give up."

"You're right," the old shopkeeper nodded. "They didn't give up, and time has shown that the wizards in the first group were the lucky ones. The next several groups found themselves in a cavern with several large and rather angry Hungarian Horntails . . . most subsequent travelers have met similar fates. I believe that the last man ended up in the Bermuda triangel after being repeatedly obliviaded."

"They're still worried about something that happened almost a hundred years ago?" Harry asked incredulously.

"No," the shopkeeper shook his head. "That was only the beginning it gets worse, much worse. They managed to keep the outside world at bay until the second great war when again their country was threatened by outside forces. After the war, it seemed for a time that things might be looking up until . . ."

"Until?"

"Until it became clear to all that the Soviet 'liberators' had no intention of leaving the country, this led up to the revolt of 1956."

"What happened?"

"The people revolted against the Soviet controlled government and managed to throw them out for a short amount of time, unfortunately resistance was crushed when the Soviet army marched into the country." The old shopkeeper gave a sad sigh, "the magical community refused to stand by and was active in resisting the Soviet attack and helping several people escape. All was going well until the Committee for State Security arrived, bringing with them several teams of loyal wizards. What followed was a war between Bűbájos-brigades and KGB wizards. On the plus side, the war had the unintended consequence of keeping most of the old Soviet Union's most effective magical teams pinned down in one area, on the minus it insured that the Bűbájos-brigades would have ample reason to be worried about foreign wizards."

"Wow," Harry shook his head. "They don't sound like very friendly people."

"That's not quite correct," the shopkeeper shook his head. "The non magical people are some of the friendliest in the world, it's only the magical people are a bit paranoid."

"Is it still possible to visit?" Harry asked with a frown. "I would rather not impose on people that would just like to be left alone."

"It's still possible if you are willing to speak to a representative from one of the Bűbájos-brigades and assure them that you have no intention of conquering their country, they might also want to know why you are visiting."

"That's fine," Harry nodded. "How do I do that?"

"Just get to Budapest and someone will come to investigate," the shopkeeper smirked. "I'll be sure to warn them of your arrival so they're not too jumpy when you show up."

"They're not very happy about magical people dropping by so I guess I'll have to arrange some form of muggle transportation then," Harry shrugged. "Do you know where I can arrange that?"

"Yes," the shopkeeper nodded, "Avala Eurocity leaves from Westbahnhof around ten

or eleven, and you're at Budapest by one o'clock, or you could do something a bit unusual."

"Like what?"

"Vienna and Budapest were once the twin capitols of the Austro-Hungarian Empire, and for that reason there are many houses and shops that existed in both cities." The shopkeeper waved his hand to a door in the back of the shop. "Most of them have been sealed up but some of them remain serviceable."

"Sounds great," Harry nodded enthusiastically. "Thank you."

"Just go down the street to the 'For Sale Bar,' it's just over the bridge in front of the Gellert hotel. There is a restaurant upstairs that serves an excellent Goulash soup, I'll tell them to meet you there."

"Thank you," Harry smiled as he stepped through the indicated door.

"No Harry," the shopkeeper spoke softly to avoid being heard. "Thank you for what you are going to do for us."

Harry walked out of the door and immediately came face to face with an old rusted out Russian tank, evidence that the conflict over who would control Hungary's magical sections was fought with both magical and non magical forces. Looking at it sadly, he continued up the street toward the location of his meeting.

"How may I help you?" A man greeted Harry as he entered the Bar.

"I need a table," Harry replied immediately. "I have to meet someone, so I'll need at least two seats."

"Yes sir," the man nodded. "Will you require anything else?"

"Yes," Harry nodded. "I've been told that your Goulash is excellent, so bring up a bowl if it's not too much trouble."

"Not a problem sir," the man nodded. "I'll take care of it."

Harry took a seat and was half way through his soup when he was joined by a beautiful woman.

"Name?" The woman asked coldly.

"Black, Ms?"

"Marosi, Marosiné Varga Katalin." She replied with no hint of warmth in her voice, "purpose of your visit?"

"Tourism," inwardly Harry shrugged. If she didn't want to be friendly, then he wasn't going to make the effort. "I wanted to do some sight seeing while I was here."

"What do you plan to do and see?" The woman regarded him suspiciously, "and where do you plan to go after this."

"I don't know, I'm told that there are some wonderful forests here . . . I wouldn't mind getting a look at some of your dragons if that's possible. After this?" Harry took a moment to think. "I don't have any solid plans, so maybe . . . Crimea."

"Why do you wish to view the Dragon breeding areas?" The woman became absolutely still as she waited for his answer.

"I like Dragons," Harry smiled. "And I've spent quite a bit of time around them, they're wonderful creatures and I think that it would be marvelous to see them in their home ranges."

"I . . . see." She relaxed, having finally divined the reason for a visit by the mysterious Mr. Black. "Then I would suggest that you make your visit soon, it would be unfortunate if you were to delay your visit too long."

"Thank you," Harry smiled. "Do I need any sort of pass?"

"No," the woman pulled out a piece of paper and wrote a quick note. "But if you give them this note, it will make your visit go much smoother."

"Thank you," Harry smiled. "Would you like something to eat? My treat."

"Thank you but no," the woman smiled. "Just visiting the dragons as soon as you possibly can will be thanks enough for me."

"It will be the first thing I do after I find myself a hotel room," Harry promised. "Thank you for the help and have a nice day."

"What a nice woman," Harry mused to himself as he finished his soup. "Going to all that trouble to make sure I visit the dragons, she must really be fond of the beasts."

Getting up, Harry paid for his meal and walked the short distance to the Gellert hotel.

"May I help you sir?" The man behind the desk asked with a raised eyebrow.

"I'd like to get a room," Harry replied. "The best in the hotel if it's available."

"Right away Mr?"

"Black," Harry smiled. "And after I check in, I need to go out for a while, so is it possible to leave my room key with the front desk?"

"Of course sir," the man nodded. "If you like you can leave your luggage here and I'll have someone put it in your room, that way you can go about your business while we get everything ready."

"Sounds perfect," Harry nodded. "Thank you."

"We try to take care of our guests," the desk man smiled. "Will there be anything else sir?"

"No," Harry shook his head. "Just let me get one thing from my pack and I'll be on my way."

"Very good sir," the desk man turned away and returned to his paperwork."

Harry rummaged around his pack for a few minutes before finding his guidebook, and after one long look around the hotel lobby, he made his exit.

Harry walked back to the magical section of town and found a place to sit. Flipping through his guide book, he soon found the section on Hungarian Horntails.

The Hungarian Horntail is one of the most recognizable of the Dragon family. Its Black scales and bronze horns make it easy to identify and the market for black dragon hide has exploded since the emergence of the Dark Lord Grabhold who dressed his followers in dark colors in defiance to the previous tradition which had the dark lord dressed in purple and his followers dressed in pink . . .

Deciding not to read anymore about historic Dark Lord fashion trends, Harry closed his guide book and walked into the nearest magical shop.

"How may I help you?" The woman behind the counter asked with a frown.

"I wanted to go see the Dragons," Harry smiled. "Do you know how I could get to where the Dragons are? I couldn't find anything in my guide book and I was hoping to get some directions."

"Not a problem," the woman smiled. "I could arrange a portkey if you'd like?"

"That would be great," Harry nodded. "Thank you."

"You might wish to look around while I make the arrangements," the woman gestured towards a corner of the store. "I think I might have some books on Dragons over there if you're interested."

"Thank you," Harry headed towards the indicated corner and began browsing.

Harry returned to the counter with an armload of books, and a grin on his face. "Have you got the portkey ready yet?"

"Yes I do," the woman nodded. "Quite a lot of books you got there."

"Yes," Harry looked down. "I'm afraid I cleared out your entire stock."

"Not my entire stock," the woman began calculating the cost of Harry's purchases. "I have a few things in the back that I don't show to the general public."

"Any chance of letting me see any of it?" Harry asked with a grin, "sounds like something I'd like to add to my library."

"Depends," the woman gave a coy smile. "What's your name?"

"Black," Harry smirked. "Mister Black."

"I . . . see," the woman gave a slow nod. "Give me a minute to check the back."

"Sure," Harry smiled. "Take all the time you need."

The woman spent several minutes in the back room and emerged with a large box full of books. "I brought all the books I had in the back, not all of them are about Dragons I'm afraid. They are all quite interesting though."

"That's fine, I'll take them all." Harry shrugged. "Are they safe to shrink or should I do something else?"

"Use this," the woman pulled a small leather organiser. "It has a rather long and confusing name, but I just call it a pocket dictionary. It's an antique, they were popular with travelers and pilgrims until international portkeys became so cheap and reliable."

"Sounds like a good gift for a friend of mine," Harry took the small item. "Do you have another one of these?"

"I'm afraid that I only have the one," the woman frowned. "No one wants them anymore and this is the only one I have left, I'm sure that you could have another made if you knew the right people."

"I suppose I do know the right people," Harry grinned. "Does it have any drawbacks?"

"It won't hold very many books," the woman shrugged. "And I'm afraid that the weight reduction charms are rather . . . primitive."

"I'll take it," Harry nodded. "Do I have enough time to put the books in the organiser before the portkey activates?"

"Of course," the woman nodded. "I forgot to ask, do you want the portkey to return you here or to some other location?"

"Could you get me back to my hotel?" Harry asked hopefully, "it's in a non magical neighborhood."

"Not a problem Mr. Black," the woman pushed over a small bronze dragon. "Horntail will take you there and 'hotel' will return you."

"Thank you," Harry paid for and pocketed his purchases. "Horntail."

"Are you Mr. Black?" A soot covered man asked nervously, "we've been told that a man named Mr. Black was coming."

"I am," Harry nodded. "I guess you've been expecting me."

"I have," the man nodded. "How much experience do you have with Dragons?"

"Not very much I'm afraid," Harry admitted. "I watched the hatch and later helped raise one, and I've had a bit more experiences with older Dragons . . . why?"

"I was hoping you could help with what's been happening," the man's shoulders dropped. "I guess that it was silly to get my hopes up like that."

"I may not have very much experience," Harry frowned. "But I do know a couple of experts, I also have several books that we can look through before we call them in."

"Wonderful," the man regained some of his enthusiasm. "Do you want to look at them now, or would you like to hear what's been happening."

"Why don't you tell me what's been going on first," Harry replied calmly. "Then we can look at the dragons."

"It all started a few months ago when I noticed one of the larger males seemed . . . sluggish," the man took a deep calming breath. "He got worse and his scales began to dull, we isolated him from the others but by then it was too late. At this time, every one of the dragons are showing signs of the sickness."

"Let's go take a look at them," Harry took a deep breath. "Do you have any idea what they're suppose to look like under mage sight?"

"I'm afraid I don't," the man shook his head. "Why?"

"Because the only thing I can do aside from flip through these books is look at them under mage sight," Harry shrugged. "I don't have many talents but I do have a few."

"Maybe one of the books will have something," the man gave a hopeful grin. "So why don't we flip through them first?"

"Good idea," Harry nodded. "You take this stack, and I'll take the other."

"And with luck, one of us will find something." The man nodded.

The two of them spent several hours going through the books, Harry going slow and making the occasional note. The other man quickly flipping through the books, and occasionally making in depth reads and rereads of new information.

"I've found nothing," the man tossed down the last book in disgust. "Did you perhaps find something?"

"No quick answers," Harry shook his head. "But I did find several diagnostic charms, with any luck we'll be able to gather up enough information so that my friends can figure out what's wrong."

"I hope you're right Mr. Black," the man forced himself to stand. "If you're not, then I'm afraid that Hungary's Hornatils will soon be no more."

"I promise that I will do everything I can to keep them alive," Harry put his books away. "Now, let's go check the dragons."

The two of them went through a long series of passages, finally emerging in a large cavern holding a large male dragon.

"Let me get to work," Harry set up a place to write and began to cast spells. After several minutes of furious note taking, Harry activated his mage sight. "I'm going to need green, blue, red and pink ink."

"Right away." The man waved a hand, summoning the requested items. "But why?"

"Because those are the colors that showed up under mage sight for some reason." Harry shrugged, "with any luck the experts will know what this all means."

"Tell me something Mr. Black," the dragon keeper looked down at Harry's notes with a smirk. "Do these experts speak Magyar?"

"I don't believe so," Harry's face screwed up in confusion. "Why?"

"Because that is the language you wrote your notes in," the dragon keeper chuckled. "It's not a problem, just tell me what language to have it translated into."

"Give me a moment and I'll do it myself," Harry grabbed a quill and began translating. "I'm sorry, I didn't notice I was putting it in the wrong language."

"Not a problem Mr. Black," the dragon keeper's smirk was firmly in place. "I don't read English so well, so it's good to have it in my native language."

"Well, now you have it in both." Harry handed over the translated notes. "I'll put out the call that you need some help with your dragons,

is there any way that you'd like them to contact you. Or would you rather they just come here."

"Tell them to contact the Búbájos-brigades and when asked have them tell the Búbájos-brigades that they are going to deal with the dragon problem," the dragon keeper smiled. "That should solve the usual visa and entry problems."

"Thank you," Harry yawned. "I've got to get back to my hotel, I'll try to get the ball moving before I get to sleep."

"Thank you Mr. Black," the man waved his hands. "Thank you for helping us deal with all of this."

"It's not a problem," Harry stifled another yawn. "I just hope that things turn out ok . . . hotel."

Harry arrived in an ally close to his hotel, and forced himself to make the short walk at a quick pace.

"Welcome back sir," the man at the front desk nodded. "Here is your key, I'll have one of the bellhops lead you up."

"Thank you," Harry followed the bellhop up to his room.

"Here we are sir," the bellhop opened the door and handed back the key. "If you need anything, don't hesitate to call the front desk."

"Thank you," Harry tipped the man and pulled out his Zippo. "Professor, are you there?"

"I'm here my friend," the Professor's unique voice answered. "What can I do for you?"

"Is my portable floo connected to the normal floo network?"

"Yes it is," the Professor gave an unseen nod. "But I would be happy to make any calls for you, as tired as you sound I think you should be getting to sleep soon."

"Sound fine," Harry gave another yawn. "There is a problem with the dragons in Hungary, I've done what I can and I was hoping to call in a couple of experts to look over my notes and find a solution."

"Who do you need me to contact?"

"The first is a man named Charlie Weasley," Harry blinked hard. "I'm not sure of his floo address, but I'm sure you can get it if you floo The Burrow in Ottery St. Catchpole."

"Charlie Weasley, Burrow." The Professor repeated, "who else?"

"The next is a man named Rubeus Hagrid, usually just goes by the name of Hagrid." Harry stifled another yawn, "he teaches 'Care of Magical Creatures' at Hogwarts, and he has experience with dragons. Try flooing Hogwarts to get in contact with him."

"Hagrid at Hogwarts," the Professor agreed. "Anyone else?"

"One more thing," Harry struggled to keep his focus. "How good is Henchgirl at brewing potions?"

"One of the best," the Professor answered immediately. "Why?"

"They might need some help with potions, and I'd rather have someone I trust providing it." Harry answered immediately. "Unless you can think of anything else, then I'm going to bed."

"Good night Mr. Black," the Professor smiled. "And goodbye."

"Goodbye." Harry replied.

"Henchgirl, Henchgirl." The Professor screamed for his wayward assistant. "Where are you?"

"What?" Henchgirl looked surly, "I'm busy."

"Then I guess you don't want the chance to update your potions laboratory?" The Professor smirked, "I'm sorry for disturbing you."

"Talk," Henchgirl was in no mood for games. "I've been awake for the past three days and I was looking forward to some rest."

"Yes I'm well aware that you've received several back issues of 'Teen Witch Weekly' or some such . . ."

"It was 'Potions Quarterly,'" Henghgirl interrupted.

"But now is not the time to dwell on such things," the Professor ignored her. "Mr. Black feels that he may need some help from you with Potions, so I think that it may be a good idea to get anything that you might conceive of needing."

"After I sleep," Henghgirl nodded. "Nothing can start happening for a few hours anyway, and I shouldn't be working until I get some rest."

"Quite right," the Professor nodded. "I didn't want to spring it on you later with no warning."

"Good night," Henghgirl yawned and went off in the direction of the bed.

"Good night," the Professor replied as he walked toward the fireplace. "Burrow."

"Yes?" A young red headed female answered the call, "can I help you?"

"I was hoping to speak with your brother," the Professor smiled. "I believe that they might be able to help me with a problem."

Not bothering to ask what brother the odd little man wanted, Ginny pulled her head out of the fireplace and called out.

"Fred, George, there's a strange man flooing you." After all, none of her 'normal' brothers would be getting a floo from such an odd little man.

"What can . . ." one twin began.

"We do for you?" the other finished.

"I am the Professor," the little man replied proudly. "And Mr. Black has asked me contact a man named Charlie Weasley about a problem in Hungary involving dragons."

"Mr. Black?" One twin asked in surprise.

"Charlie?" The other agreed. "We'll do what we can, do you have some way that Charlie can contact you?"

"Here," the Professor handed a small object through the flames. "There are directions engraved on the side, just tell him to call for the Professor."

"You . . ."

"Invented this?" Fred finished, "would you mind taking a look at . . ."

"Some of our work?" George smiled hopefully.

"I'm always happy to help out a pair of burgeoning inventors." The Professor smiled, handing through two more small objects. "Call me in a few day after everything has calmed down with the dragons."

"Thank . . ."

"You Professor"

"Any time," the Professor gave one last smile before ending the call.

AN: When I say French teams of wizards were involved in carving up Hungary and getting reparations, this is not bashing the French. After WWI, the losing side was forced to pay the winning side. This effort was mostly driven by the French government and it got so bad that the US government withdrew and refused to have anything to do with it. If this bashes anyone, it's short minded and greedy politicians which can be found in any country. The Vikings considered pink to be a manly color, ponder on. Everyone was waiting with baited breath for the meeting between the twins and the Professor and Henchgirl, here it is.

Thanks go to Ms. Agnes Nemet for her information on Hungary.

OMAKE: Due to a spelling mistake that got caught. This takes place at some future part of the story and will be referenced if I remember it.

"Are you sure he's in there?" The group of death eaters regarded the old factory with suspicion, "and not just planning an ambush?"

"I'm sure," the old night watchman nodded. "He's in there and all alone, poor bastard won't stand a chance."

"Excellent," one of the death munchers smirked. "Mr. Black will die tonight."

"Whatever," the old night watchman shrugged. "Just pay me and be on your way."

"Oh we'll pay you alright," the assorted bad guys smirked. "Cruc . . ."

"And not with any o' dem spells either," the old man knocked the wand out of the way. "Gold or cash, don't take no checks."

"Fine," the death muncher muttered digging through his pockets. "But I'll have you know that this goes against years of tradition."

"Cough it up," the old man held out his hand. "And be on your way."

It took several moments for the assorted death munchers to gather up enough gold to pay the old man.

"Thank you," the old man pocketed the gold. "And seeing as hows ya' paid without too much trouble . . . ah'm gonna give you some advice. If yous wanna get the jump on Mr. Black, ah'd advise you ta hide in the old bin fulla copper. He'll never suspect an ambush from there."

"Good job old man," the death eater gave an amateurish sneer. "And if your information is wrong."

"No, no, no." The old man shook his head. "You gotta do it like this. And if your information is wrong . . . see how I finished? The dramatic trailing off? Try it again."

"Like this?" The death eater cleared his throat. "And if your information is wrong . . ."

"Perfect," the old man nodded. "Now don't forget, bin fulla copper."

"We got it," the death eaters nodded.

"Dumb bastards," the old man muttered as he watched them run off. "Ah guess ah better give 'em a few minutes to get into place before ah hit the button."

The old man waited a few moments before he started up the old factory. The death eaters screamed as the bin full of copper scrap that they had been hiding in was dumped into a much larger crucible of melted copper. The next day, the workers that ran the old factory were shocked to discover that someone had completed several days work during the night in the form of several thousand feet of new copper cable.

"Ah should be tarred and feathered for that joke," the old man smirked. "Turning a Cabal of death eaters into a cable of death eaters, wonda if da Professor will buy the finished product. Ah well, if he don't ah'm sure that Mr. Black will get a laugh when he hears about this."

Dumbledore's Obsessed with Pornography

Harry woke late and took a deep breath the next morning. Just as he was about to let himself slip back into his dream, his eyes shot open. Because of his actions, it was likely that there were two Order members on their way to Hungary, worse two Order members that were familiar with Harry Potter.

Cursing, Harry rushed around the room throwing his few possessions into his pack, frantically hoping to be ready and on the road before either of his friends could find him. Shouldering his pack, Harry cautiously peeked out the door to insure that the hall was clear before walking down to the front desk.

"May I help you?" The desk clerk smiled at Harry's approach.

"Checking out," Harry fought to keep his voice even. "Finished my business sooner than I expected, so there really isn't any point in staying much longer."

"I understand sir," the desk clerk nodded. "The cost of your stay has already been taken care of, so if you'll just sign here . . . thank you sir. Have a pleasant trip."

"I will," Harry nodded. "Goodbye."

Harry forced himself not to run as he returned to the magical shop where he had purchased the portkey to the Dragon Breeding grounds.

"Hello again," the woman behind the counter smiled. "Need another portkey to visit the dragons?"

"This time I need a portkey out of the country if you can swing it," Harry smiled. "And I'm in a bit of a hurry I'm afraid."

"I'm afraid that I can't get you an international portkey," the woman frowned. "But I can get you to my uncle's shop in Halas, I know he can arrange something."

"Thank you," Harry started to relax. "How soon can you get me to Halas?"

"Right now," the woman flipped the sign on her shop to closed. "I was planning to visit him when you showed up. Unless you'd rather not share a portkey?"

"A shared portkey is fine," Harry smiled. "Thank you."

"Not a problem," the woman returned his smile. "Just touch the rope, and we're going in three, two, . . ."

"Welcome," an older man greeted them on their arrival. "I didn't expect to see you for a few days yet, I guess you were able to wrap things up faster that I expected."

"You'd guess right," the woman smiled. "He needs an international portkey to . . ."

"Crimea"

"Excellent," the old man nodded. "I can get one that will take you to my cousin's shop in Yalta, it won't take but a few hours for me to make the arrangements."

"Thank you," Harry nodded. "And sorry to interrupt your visit with your niece."

"My fault for not expecting you here sooner," the old man shrugged. "While you're waiting, feel free to look over what I have for sale or . . ."

"Or?"

"Or you could visit the Lace Museum," the old man smiled. "It really is something you have to do if you're visiting Halas."

"How far is it from her?"

"Just down the street," the old man waved to the door. "You can't miss it."

"Sounds nice," Harry nodded. "I think I'll do that."

"And be sure to pick up some lace while you're here," the old man called out as Harry retreated. "It may be expensive, but it's well worth the price."

"Good afternoon," a woman greeted Harry upon his entrance to the lace museum.

"Is this the lace museum?" Harry asked with a shy smile.

"Yes it is," the woman nodded. "You might wish to come back at another time, there is currently a school field trip wondering around the museum so . . ."

"It's fine," Harry shrugged. "I don't have the time to come back anyway."

"Then have a pleasant visit."

"Thank you," Harry nodded. "I will."

Harry spent a few minutes wondering around the museum and was examining one of the exhibits, when a young girl walked up.

"If you look close, you can see the fish."

"What?" Harry turned to look at the young girl.

"I said, that if you look closely you can see the fish." The young girl smiled. "Three superimposed fish is the symbol of Halas, and if you look close you can find them around the border. My Nagypapi taught me that."

"Thank you," Harry smiled. "I'm Black, what's your name."

"I'm Ághnesh Német," the girl smiled. "Do you see the fish?"

"Not yet," Harry squinted. "Ah, there they are, thank you."

"Don't mention it," the girl smiled. "Can you see the fish on this one?"

IIIIIIII

"Well?"

"Black says that he's on his way out of the country," Marosiné Varga Katalin replied with a neutral look, "he told the hotel desk clerk that his business has been completed."

"I see," the other figure nodded. "Did he fix the problem we were having with the dragons?"

"He cast several diagnostic charms and looked at them under mage sight," Katlin replied, "nothing has been solved but we have called in two outside experts that he recommended."

"Is there any indication that he didn't know that we were having problems? Any indication that his visit was a coincidence?"

"I talked to the people that watched the dragons," Katlin smiled. "They tell me that he had with him a rather large collection of books about the Hungarian Horntail, many of which are so rare that the caretakers have never even heard of them. Not the sort of thing that a person just happens to have with them."

"I see," the other figure paused. "Do we have any idea how he knew that we needed help?"

"We have one theory, Mr. Black was seen talking to Béla Kapus's granddaughter." Katlin smiled, "he may be retired but . . ."

"That doesn't mean that he's out of the game," the other figure laughed. "I suppose those old timers do stick together, have you looked for a connection?"

"There were several people that helped us during the nineteen fifty six revolution," Katlin smiled. "And many of them don't have a name to go with them, "Black could be anyone of them."

"I see," the other figure nodded. "Keep looking, and tell me if you find anything."

"I will sir," Katlin nodded. "How close do you want us to watch the outsiders that Black recommended?"

"They're here already?" The figure considered the question for a moment, "don't be obvious about it. They are here by our invitation after all."

"As you say," Katlin agreed.

IIIIIIII

"Great ta be 'ere." Hagrid greeted the Hungarian Dragon Keepers a bit too enthusiastically. "Now where's the Dragons?"

"Right through there sir," the Dragon Keeper smiled nervously. "Be careful, they're dangerous."

"Ah'm sure they wouldn't 'urt ah fly," Hagrid disagreed as he walked towards the cute cuddly . . . dragons.

"Can you tell me why the two of us were contacted?" Charlie asked after Hagrid had gone.

"You were recommended by Mr. Black," the Dragon Keeper smiled. "He told me that he couldn't do much, then he wrote out forty pages of notes and observations and told me that he was going to contact you and Mr. Hagrid."

"I . . . see," Charlie frowned. "Is it possible for me to speak with Mr. Black? I'd like to get his input on a few things if I could."

"I'm afraid not," the Dragon Keeper shrugged. "I spoke to his hotel and they informed me that he had left the country."

"Pity," Charlie shrugged. The Order would have to wait. "Could you show me those notes?"

"Right here sir," the man pulled out a thick stack of paper. "Mr. Black was kind enough to provide an English translation so that you would have a reference."

"How thoughtful of him." Charlie took the papers, "let's get to work."

|||||||

"Hello?" Harry returned to the store, "is anyone here?"

"Just a moment," the shopkeeper replied. "The portkey isn't ready yet, but it will be in a few moments. Feel free to browse the store while you wait."

"Ok," Harry chuckled silently. These shopkeepers were always trying to get him to buy souvenirs.

"Did you find anything?" The shopkeeper walked to the counter with a smile.

"A few things," Harry placed a few items on the counter. "I like these glass things."

"Hand cut Goda lead crystal." The shopkeeper nodded, "very good choice. I've also set aside some magical lace if you'd like."

"I already bought quite a bit of non magical lace, but why not. " Harry shrugged, "add it to the rest of my things."

"I also have your porkey ready." The man bagged Harry's purchases, "have a good trip."

"Thank you," Harry paid for his purchases. "I only wish that I could have stayed longer."

"Come back and visit us again someday," the shopkeeper smiled. "And get a chance to look at what you missed."

"I'm not sure that I'll live that long." Harry smiled sadly, and disappeared.

"Hello," an older man greeted Harry upon his appearance. "How are you today?"

"Very good." Harry yawned. "Can I arrange an internal portkey here?"

"Yes," the man nodded. "Where would you like to go?"

"Half a league, half a league, half a league onward." Harry smiled.

"All in the valley of Death Rode the six hundred," the old shopkeeper nodded.

"The Charge of the Light Brigade," Harry shrugged. "Tennyson."

"I'll have it ready as soon as I can," the shopkeeper nodded. "If you're here to see the valley of Death, then I might have something you'd be interested in."

"What's that?" Harry's eyebrows shot up in interest.

"There was a rather old soldier that served in the campaign," the shopkeeper pulled out a long wrapped bundle from under the table. "Story goes that he was a squib from one of the . . . less tolerant family's and he left home and bought a commission. He distinguished himself in his first campaign and his father heard that the son that had only brought shame to the family name was now bringing glory."

"Glory in the muggle world?" Harry asked mildly.

"Glory killing muggles," the old shopkeeper shrugged. "He wasn't a very nice person but he did have his moments, he decided that if his son was going to do the family proud by killing muggles then the family was going to help. He went to the finest makers and commissioned a sword, then he charmed it with all the knowledge of his family."

"What could it do?"

"It had several effects, most of them were fairly standard. Increase damage, ever sharpness, and in certain circumstances it would emit a faint green glow." The old shopkeeper smiled, "it's most interesting feature though was the fact that it could change into a scythe."

"Why did they charm it to do that?" Harry frowned, "and how did it get it's power. I doubt that they would bother to waist enough energy on a squib to keep it going forever."

"It would drain ambient energy to keep itself going," the shopkeeper shuddered. "Very dark magic, plants would wither and animals would get nervous when it was out of it's sheath."

"Let me look at it," Harry requested.

"Alright," the old man unwrapped the sword. "Don't see that it could cause much harm if we put it back quickly."

Harry pulled out the sword and spent several minutes checking the blade and it's charms under mage sight, finally he re sheathed it and glanced down at the name on the handle.

"How much?" Harry's voice came in a whisper.

"Seeing as how it belongs to your family," the old man grinned. "I don't think I should charge."

"What happened to the soldier?"

"Major Black?" The shopkeeper shrugged, "no one knows. He disappeared, might have been killed, might have resigned, and might have been taken prisoner. No one knows, all that was ever found was his sword."

"When will you have the portkey ready?"

"Shouldn't be too long," the shopkeeper smiled. "Where do you want it to take you after your visit?"

"Romania," Harry was still a bit shaken. "Close to the dragon sanctuary."

"For a bit more I can put in another destination if you'd like," the old man gave a wide grin.

"Transylvania after that," Harry tore his eyes off his new sword. "Will that be a problem?"

"Not at all," the old man shook his head. "One piece of advice though."

"What?"

"When you're traveling in Transylvania . . . be sure to be armed, won't hurt to have that new sword of yours on your hip." The old man waved in the direction of Harry's new blade, "sometimes being visibly armed is enough to solve the problem . . . other times, it helps to have things hidden. Don't matter what you chose to do, just don't be without a weapon in Transylvania."

"Why?" Harry frowned. "Should I avoid going?"

"One thing having visible arms does is it shows that you have the money to buy them, shows that you're too important to be a food source." The shopkeeper shrugged, "Transylvania is a good place to visit. But it's also not a safe place to visit if you have any magical blood."

"So I should skip it then?" Harry sighed in disappointment. "Ah well, one more place I'll never see."

"I never said that," the shopkeeper shook his head. "I said that it was dangerous. So long as you're careful, then I don't see any reason to skip it. Read that guide book of yours and talk to the locals."

"I will," Harry nodded. "How long until the portkey is ready."

"Right now," the old man handed over a small steel ball on a chain. "Once you're tired of seeing the valley of Death, say two, when you're tired of that say three, and when you're tired of that buy a new portkey."

"Thank you," Harry nodded. "How much do I owe you, and when it set to go off?"

"Nothing and right now," the shopkeeper grinned at his customer's shocked expression as he disappeared. It was only right to give him a bit of a break knowing what he was about to face.

IIIIIIII

"Those notes that Charlie brought in?" Moody glanced down at the stack of paper. "I looked over them, looks like they've got some sort of pattern."

"Could it be chance?" Albus asked with a thoughtful smile, "or your 'Constant Vigilance' getting the best of you?"

"The chances of it being natural are slim to none," Moody gave the notes another look. "I'd like to take some time to look over them."

"Very well," Dumbledore nodded. "Then unless someone has something else to add? I call this meeting of the Order of the Phoenix to an end, we'll meet again in twelve hours to discuss how our assignments went."

Twelve Hours Later

"Well Albus I did it," Moody yawned. "After eight hours I finally managed to figure out the message that Mr. Black encoded in his notes, can't say I have any idea what it means though."

"What are they?" Albus asked with a smile.

"Just a few numbers," Moody shrugged. "36-23-33."

"Now why would Black have taken the time to code the measurements to this month's 'Playwizard' centerfold?" Dumbledore mused aloud.

The Order froze and several members began pinching themselves nervously to check if they were in the land of dreams.

"Albus?" McGonagall.

"Um," Dumbledore chuckled nervously, "they have good articles?"

"Like the one on barbecuing in last month's issue," Tonks nodded. "That was a good one."

"Barbecuing?" Dumbledore asked dumbly.

The Order members shifted their frozen stare to the young Auror.

"Like he said," Tonks shrugged. "It has good articles, also helps me shift into different body types to see them without any clothes. Good practice."

"Moving back to the Subject," the Headmaster smiled nervously. "Does anyone have any idea why Mr. Black would put that in the notes?"

"Maybe he thinks Charlie should get out more," Tonks shrugged. "Who knows."

"He's playing with us," Moody frowned. "Wanted to see if we would take the time to go over what he left."

"I concur," Dumbledore nodded. "It looks like Mr. Black is pulling some sort of Prank on us."

AN: I was going to have Ron walk in and recognise the measurements and then let Molly erupt. I decided Dumbledore being the subscriber would be funnier. Harry is on his way to Transylvania, only a few more countries before he leaves Europe. Then only a few more countries before he returns to Europe, then a few more countries before the vacation is over . . . sort of.

The Valley of Death

"Well?"

"The outside experts that Black called in figured out the problem," Katalin replied. "Vitamin deficiency coupled with a mild disease - the draconic equivalent of scurvy while contracting the common cold. Either one by itself would have been simple to treat. Together, they were far more serious. "

"Have they fixed it?"

"We're in the process of solving the problem, but there have been some delays."

"What delays?"

"Well," Katalin sighed. "They want to use the services of a Potions Master of their choice, the keepers refuse to let the man anywhere near the dragons."

"Don't we have our own Potions Masters?" The other figure seemed amused, "why not use one of them?"

"None of them speak English fluently enough to feel confident that they won't make a mistake," Marosiné Varga Katalin shrugged. "They seem to speak it well enough to me but I guess that when you're dealing with medicines, you don't want to take chances."

"Didn't Black offer the services of one of his people?"

"Yes he did," she nodded. "But she's a bit . . . unstable, she was refused her master's certificate because she was considered too impulsive."

"That's the public reason," the other figure shrugged. "Have you found out the private reason?"

"I would suspect that it's because she likes to read muggle science books," Katlin smirked. "And the fact that she likes to create things that blend muggle technology and magic."

"I see," the other figure nodded. "A muggle born facing a panel of purebloods."

"No sir," she shook her head. "A pureblood facing a mixed panel, "mostly halfbloods, some mixedbloods and three purebloods."

"Who all wanted to prove their social positions by being even snottier than they had to be." The dark figure nodded, "there is no snobbery worse than nouvelle rich snobbery."

"As you say," Katlin shrugged. "How do you want us to deal with this situation?"

"Use Black's Potions Mistress," the dark figure replied. "If she's good enough for him, then I suspect that she's the best. Have our Masters watch her work and if necessary, have her make something more difficult to show her skill. I want to repay both her and Black, and it strikes me that helping her get her long withheld master's papers is a good start."

"Yes Sir," Katlin nodded. "I'll make the arrangements immediately."

IIIIIIII

Harry appeared on the top of a hill and gazed into the valley. For a moment, he saw the place as it had been, and for a moment he saw the men of the Light Brigade charging into the Russian guns.

"The Charge of The Light Brigade, the Charge of the Heavy Brigade, and the Thin Red Line of Hero's." Harry spoke in a whisper, "they talked about you when I was younger. It was the only time I can remember them being harsh with Dudders. He said something bad about you and my Uncle threatened to give me half of the little whale's desert, didn't happen of course but even he respected your sacrifice."

Harry drew his sword and saluted, "I wish I had you helping me. I wish I had men even half as brave as you behind me when I fought in the cemetery. I'll try to be as brave as you, I promise that I'll honor your memory by facing my end with the same courage you met yours with."

Harry shuddered as his vision of the past became a bit too vivid, "and maybe after I . . . after things end. Maybe people will be able to talk about it the same way they talk about this. Maybe I'll stop being the 'Boy-Who-Lived' or the 'Boy-Who-Died.' Maybe I'll just be 'Harry,' the man who faced his end like a Trooper of the thirteenth."

Harry sheathed his sword, "it would be nice to have people respect me for something I actually did for a change, even if I'm not around to enjoy it. I suppose that if you have to die, it's better to die on your feet like a man than to run and try to avoid my fate." Harry shrugged, "not like running would do me any good anyway . . . two."

Harry arrived in front of a large open iron gate. Peering inside cautiously, he was startled by a greeting.

"Hello, come right in."

"Hello," Harry took a cautious step through the gate. "Who are you?"

"I'm Spencer Cummings," the man replied cheerfully. "Welcome to the Romanian Dragon Sanctuary."

"Thank you," Harry stepped in. "Has Charlie gotten back from Hungary yet?"

"Not yet," the man shook his head. "But I can take a message if you like?"

"No thanks," Harry allowed himself to relax. "I was just wondering if they had solved the problem yet."

"Not to the best of my knowledge," Spencer shrugged. "But I'm sure that they'll have it wrapped up in no time, sign the guest book and I'll give you the tour. This is my first year at the sanctuary and I haven't given any tours before, so you'll be my first."

"Alright," Harry agreed signing the book. "Let's go."

The two of them spent several minutes walking through the sanctuary and Spencer was obviously enjoying his time as a guide.

"That over there is the Dragon that Harry Potter faced in the Third task of the Tri-Wizard Tournament," Spencer pointed to the indicated dragon with a smile on his face. "Feel a bit sorry for the beast, having to go against 'The-Boy-Who-Lived' there was no way it could win."

"Didn't believe the rumors that he was a glory hound, or a dangerous lunatic huh?" Harry fought to keep the annoyance off his face.

"Course not," Spencer shook his head. "Sides, Charlie knows him and says that he's a very modest boy. He won't hear of anyone speaking out against him, and neither will I."

"That's rather refreshing," Harry muttered. "What about that dragon? Why does he look so depressed."

"Well . . ." The indicated dragon's head shot up and it began running towards Harry and Spencer, "run."

"Wait," Harry stood perfectly still. "Running from a large predator is never a good idea."

Spencer ignored the advice and took off as fast as his legs could carry him.

The Dragon stopped just before it was about to trample Harry and lowered its snout to get a good whiff of his hair.

"Norbert?" Harry reached up to pet the dragon's snout. "You've grown, it's good to see you again."

The dragon gave a contented sigh and laid down, allowing it's self to be petted.

"I take it that Hagrid hasn't visited for a while?" Harry scratched the dragon under the chin, "and I guess that you've been lonely."

Norbert gave another contented purr, "I'll tell Charlie to have Hagrid visit you. Harry promised, might be a good idea to have him leave something with a bit of his scent too."

Harry had to spend about two hours petting and playing with the lonely dragon before it was willing to let him out of its sight. "Don't worry Norbert, I'll see what I can do to make sure you get visited more often."

"You . . . you're alive?" Spencer's eyes were the size of basketball hoops when he saw Harry's return, "I was just calling in reinforcements to go recover your body."

"Well . . ." Harry's reply was cut off by the arrival of a dozen heavily armed men.

"Where's this tourist we gotta recover?" A woman with several visible burns and scars asked with a frown, "and what were you doing giving a tour without supervision?"

"I'm right here," Harry spoke up. "So you don't have to bother going out after me."

"Fought 'im off yourself?" The woman nodded, "not many people can fight a dragon without backup."

"I didn't fight him," Harry shook his head. "I . . ."

"Hid from 'im then," one of the men asked. "Sensible, much more intelligent than most. Too afraid of being called a coward."

"I didn't hide from him," Harry shook his head again. "I . . ."

"Musta distracted 'im somehow and made your escape." Another of the men nodded, "another good strategy."

"I played with him," Harry was tired of being interrupted. "And petted him, he wasn't trying to hurt me he was lonely."

"Lonely?" The tough looking woman asked incredulously.

"Yes, lonely." Harry confirmed. "Tell Charlie to get Hagrid to visit his baby more often, Norbert is lonely and he just wants to play . . . three." Tired of talking to such rude people, Harry activated his portkey and left.

"Played wid 'im?" One of the tough looking men shook his head in wonder, we gotta give this guy a job. "He'd fit right in, what's 'is name Spence?"

"I'm not sure," the man smiled nervously. "Let me check my guest book."

"Check it then," the woman nodded. "Any man brave enough to stand up to a charging dragon and nuts enough to pet and play with it has a place on my team."

"It says here his name is . . . oh dear."

"Let me see that," one of the men grabbed the book. "Says 'ere that 'is name is . . . Mr. Black."

"I thought he was a myth?" The woman shook her head, "something that the Quibbler dreamed up to sell more papers."

"E's real." One of the men confirmed, "got a brother in law in law enforcement. From the way 'e talks, the Quibbler doesn't even tell you half of what the guy does."

"No wonder he wasn't worried about the dragon," Spencer's voice was filled with awe. "Even if he couldn't have charmed it, it didn't pose any danger to him."

"I'm back," Charlie entered. "What'd I miss?"

"Quite a bit," the scarred woman looked at Charlie with a shell shocked expression. "Who's your friend?"

"This is Hagrid," Charlie introduced the giant man. "I was hoping to . . ."

"Mr. Black says that Hagrid needs to visit his baby more often," the woman interrupted. "He's getting lonely."

"Ah knew it," enormous tears threatened to leak from the corners of Hagrid's eyes. "Where is he? Where's my little Norbert?"

"Spencer will take you to go see him," the woman's expression didn't change. "And I'm going to go get drunk . . . very drunk."

"Ah'm cummin too." One of the men agreed.

"Me too," another agreed.

"After what A' saw ta'day, Ah don't think Ah'm ever gonna be sober again."

"Won't someone please tell me what's going on?" Charlie demanded.

IIIIIIII

"Congratulations, um . . . Henggirl." The chief of Hungary's Potions Mastery board smiled, "we have found that your work more than entitles you to recognition as a full Master."

"I'm honored," Henggirl wiped a tear from the corner of her eye. "Thank you."

"Before you go," another member of the panel stopped her. "Would you mind telling us why you're called Henggirl?"

"Because I'm the Professor's Hench," Henggirl shrugged. "I know that Henchman or Henchmen is more traditional, but I'm a girl."

"Yes, well . . . you won't have to be a hench anymore." The man replied with a smile, "you're a full Master now."

"No," Henggirl shook her head. "I'll still be a hench."

"Why?" One of the female members of the board looked to be working herself into a rage. "Is it because you're a woman?"

"No," Henggirl shook her head. "It's because I lost the coin toss."

"Coin toss?" The woman replied dumbly.

"Yes," Henggirl frowned. "I picked heads and the Professor picked tails and won, it's not fair. He looks more like a proper hench than I do as short as he is, granted he doesn't have a hump but I'm sure that we could think of something."

"How did losing a coin toss make you a hench?" The woman had an odd look on her face.

"Well," Henggirl replied. "There can only be one Professor or Doctor, and they usually have a loyal hench. We both wanted to be the professor so I proposed a coin toss, he won. Shudda picked rock paper scissors, he always picks rock."

"Yes well . . ."

"Congratulations Henggirl," the Professor interrupted with his loud entrance. "I knew you could do it."

"See," Henggirl pointed. "I told you he fits the part better than I can."

"Yes well . . ."

"Let's be off," the Professor's smiled. "We have to get back to our laboratory."

"I want to pick up a few things first." Henggirl disagreed.

"Laboratory"

"Shopping"

"Laboratory"

"Shopping"

"Laboratory"

"Shopping"

"Laboratory"

"Shopping"

"Laboratory"

"Shopping"

"Laboratory"

"Shopping"

"Laboratory"

"Shopp . . . Rock, Paper, Scissors."

"Deal," the Professor nodded. Good old rock, nothing beats rock.

"Hah," Henchgirl cried in triumph. "Paper covers rock, I win."

"That makes no sense," the Professor whined. "Why doesn't rock grind paper into nothingness?"

"I don't make the rules," Henchgirl shrugged. "But you WILL follow them."

"Fine," the Professor pouted.

"Bye all," Henchgirl waved cheerfully. "Thanks for the mastery."

IIIIIIIIII

Three days later

"I figured out what the message meant," Moody shook his head in disgust. "Took me three days, but I figured out what it meant. Now I want to know how he knew that Albus 'read' 'Playwizard' enough that he was able to recognise the measurements so fast."

"I told you, I like the articles." Dumbledore protested, "I only recognised the measurements because . . ."

"Albus's obsession with pornography is not the issue here," McGonagall interrupted before the Headmaster could think of an excuse. "What did you figure out Madeye?"

"I had Tonks do some checking," Moody leered.

"Well," Tonks smiled. "I pretended to be interested in writing an article on 'How to Cook the Best Hams' to get in, some snooping revealed that the current centerfold had been arrested by the Americans for being a Polyjuiced Deatheater."

"Black gave us all the info we needed," Moody gave an annoyed frown that scared half the room. "And we thought that he was pulling some sort of prank."

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"Master," Wormtail shuddered. "I have some bad news and some humorous news."

"What's the humorous news?" The Dark Lord hissed.

"Our spy at the Ministry tells us that Dumbledore is obsessed with Pornography."

"Hehehehehehehe," the Dark Lord gave his first non-evil laugh in years. "And the bad news?"

"Mr. Black knew about our plot with the Playwizard centerfold," Wormtail shuddered. "And warned the Order."

"Wormtail," the Dark Lord said calmly. "CRUCIO."

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The Quibbler

by Ms. E

A series of unfortunate events. That is the best way to describe the fates of several groups of Death Eaters that were dispatched to Austria by the Dark Lord to kill Mr. Black. "We found the first group on

some train tracks (Editors Note: Like the Hogwart's Express) and they weren't in very good shape." Reported a Senior Anonymous Source in Magical Law Enforcement, "looked like Black was still a bit angry about what happened in Germany." (See a recap of the Bloodbath in Germany on page A2) This was the first but by no means the last group of Death Eaters found killed in a horribly brutal way . . .

. . . perhaps the most famous of Mr. Black's victims were the infamous Lestranges. "Had to clean them up with a mop." Our source in the coroner's office went on to add, "I don't know what they did to annoy him. But after seeing what he did to them, I would suggest suicide to anyone that angers Mr. Black."

Mr. Black Can Speak to Dragons?

by Someone other than Luna Lovegood

Mr. Black stunned the world yesterday with the first recorded taming of a Dragon. The dragon named Norbert is living in the Romanian Dragon Sanctuary, handlers say that he is much more docile then most dragons . . .

. . . an Anonymous source in the sanctuary tells us that Mr. Black was able to communicate with the dragon and determine that its unhappiness was caused by loneliness . . .

. . . as regular readers will know, Mr. Black has in the past shown that he is a talented Cryptozooligist. His accomplishments include; being instrumental in curing what is now being called the Hungarian Dragon Blight, the discovery of the Crumple . . .

AN: The author of the Quibbler article Ms. E, Mr. E, Mister E, mystery. Just in case someone didn't get it.

Thanks go to Ed Becerra for making this a bit better than it was.

The Black Baron

The sun was starting to set as Harry arrived. Looking around, he realised that he was in some sort of clearing in a dark forbidding forest and he immediately pulled out his guide book to get an idea of what he should expect.

Transylvania is a wonderful country with a rich history, Transylvania is also filled with a large assortment of mystical creatures that regard Humans as a good source of protein. What follows is a partial list of dangerous creatures and how to kill them.

Editor's Note: Most things will die if you chop off their head, when in doubt try that.

Vampires: Weaknesses include sunlight, wooden stakes to the heart, . . .

Harry spent several minutes going over the list and only finished when he no longer had any light to read by.

Remembering the shopkeeper's warning, Harry secured the sword to his hip and went digging through his pack for his whip and Pugio.

"Let's see if I can get this thing to work," Harry muttered as he uncoiled the whip. "Hopefully without injuring myself too badly, mental note: get some healing potions."

Giving the whip a few experimental cracks, Harry was pleased to learn that the whip seemed to move according to his will. Sending the tip over his shoulder, Harry frowned as the whip seemed to get caught on a branch or something. Giving it one good tug, he managed to get it free and returned it to his belt.

"Practice," he muttered to himself. "I need more practice."

Shaking his head, Harry began walking towards the distant lights that he hoped indicated some sort of town or inn.

Behind him, two vampires were frozen in shock. Only seconds ago, they had watched as the stranger's whip wrapped around their leader's neck and decapitated what they had thought was an extraordinary powerful vampire.

"Backup?" Whispered one.

"Not even then," replied the other. "Let someone else have this one."

"I think you're right," the first was still staring at the spot the stranger had been standing on. "He didn't even bother to look back, he just . . . just killed. Not many people can do something like that."

"I never liked Vlad anyway," the second shrugged. "What kind of Vampire picks such a stereotypical name?"

"And it's not like the stranger was after us," the second agreed. "He let us go, most humans with that kind of skill would have killed the both of us for even thinking about jumping him."

"Should we warn Volos?"

"Let him die," the vampire laughed. "Never liked him either."

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After a few minutes of walking, Harry came to the door of what looked like an inn. Shifting his clothing from backpacker to something a bit less noticeable, Harry entered the building.

Every eye turned to watch Harry as he entered the room.

"Is there a place I can get a room around here?" Harry asked the bartender with a smile.

"Upstairs," the woman nodded. "If you want a room with a lock and a sturdy door, that's extra. If you want a room with a lock on the outside the door, that's extra. If you want clean sheets, that's . . ."

"Extra," Harry nodded. "One with a lock on the inside and a sturdy door."

"Fine," the woman nodded. "Would you like something to eat?"

"What do you have?"

"We have soup and lamb," the woman looked up. "If you want blood . . . if you want blood, then I suggest you ask Volos to share his with you. He doesn't like it if I give out his private stock without his permission."

"Lamb and soup will be fine," Harry nodded as he dropped a few silver coins on the bar. "I'll eat it down here."

"Sit where ever you like," the woman turned her back. "I'll have your food out in a bit."

"Thank you." Harry took a seat that allowed him to keep his back to the wall and a view of the door, his quiet vacation was getting to be more exciting than he could stand.

"Here," the woman dropped a large tray on Harry's table. "I included a beer, don't ever let it be said that I didn't give a man a good meal when the time came."

"When the time came?" Harry looked up from his book with a raised eyebrow.

"Volos heard you were in town," the woman replied in a flat tone. "And since I doubt that you have a way out of here . . . well since I doubt that you have a way out of here, I'm sorry but it's better he take you than someone we know. I didn't tell him and I don't know who did but I'm sorry."

"Don't worry about it," Harry sighed and carefully closed his book. "All I wanted was a quiet vacation and for some reason I never get a moments peace, send him over when he comes in."

"You don't have to worry about that," the woman gave a cynical smile. "I may not like it, but there is no way I would go against Volos and his gang."

Harry carefully propped his book up and continued reading while he ate.

"Good meal," Harry complimented to the bartender as she cleared his plates. "Could I get another beer Ms . . ."

"You can have another beer," the woman nodded. "And at no charge, as for the name . . . it's easier if I don't get too close to you. I'm sorry, try to see it from my side, I'm sorry."

"Think nothing of it," Harry shrugged. "We can talk more about it later, when do you think Volos will be arriving?"

"Shouldn't be long," the woman glanced at the door nervously. "I doubt that you'll even have a chance to finish your beer."

"Then you had better hurry and bring it to me," Harry smiled. "Wouldn't want to miss drinking anymore of it then I had to."

The woman returned with Harry's beer and Harry returned to his book. Harry was half way through his beer when the room became still. Looking up, Harry saw three pale men standing in the door. After pausing for a moment to speak with the bartender, the three men headed straight to Harry's table.

"You must be Volos," Harry forced himself not to show any of the nervousness that he was feeling. "It's a pleasure to finally meet you."

"You're in my town," Volos gave a cruel smile. "That means that you have to pay a tax, and there's only one thing you have that I want."

"I've been doing a bit of reading while I waited for you," Harry ignored the vampire's speech and smiled. "I read that Vampires were vulnerable to sunlight, seems that there is something about the sun's rays that causes them to burn up. Is that true, or was my book mistaken?"

"It's true." Volos was confused, they were usually begging for their life at this point. "Pity that you don't have any Sunlight with you."

"Isn't it," Harry smiled and hit all three vampires with a tanning charm. "Then I guess that this will have to do."

The vampires screamed as their flesh began to burn, Volos made a mad lunge across Harry's table and was able to make it half across before collapsing in agony.

"Hmmm," Harry face showed no signs of the horror he was feeling as he examined the three writhing vampires. "I expected it to do more than that, oh well looks like I'll have to finish this the old fashion way. And as the book said, few things can survive without their heads."

The bar patrons watched in shock as the stranger drew a curved sword and decapitated the three vampires.

"Could I have the key to my room now?" Harry asked calmly as he sheathed his sword. "It's been a long day and I'd really like to get some rest."

"No key," the dumbfounded woman could only stare at the remains of the three vampires that had previously claimed ownership of the town. "There's a bar you can put across the door, first one on the left."

"Thank you," Harry suppressed another shudder as he walked up the stairs. Seeing the three vampires burn had brought up unpleasant memories of his first year and the fate of his Defence Against the Dark Arts Professor. "And sorry about the mess."

"Did you see that?" One of the men at the bar spoke after Harry had left, "did you see what he did to them?"

"I saw," the woman nodded. "Just think of what he could do to you if he decides to be insulted by the fact that you told Volos about him."

"It was him or one of us," the man protested. "Volos wasn't going to live forever on the donations we provided him, sooner or later he was going to take another one of us."

"Just hope that he feels the same way," the bartender nodded towards the stairs. "Because I don't like thinking about what will happen if he doesn't."

"Did anyone else feel it when he pulled out that sword?" An older man that had been sitting near Harry's table asked with a look of fear, "that . . . coldness, the feeling of dread?"

"What is he?" Another man asked with a frown, "I doubt that he's a vampire because we all saw him eat. But he . . . he can't be human can he? Not after the way he killed Volos, treated a two hundred year old vampire like he as a child."

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"It seems that there's a new hunter in the area sir"

"What happened?" Demanded a figure cloaked in shadow.

"Vlad is dead, so is Volos and his men," the flunky replied calmly.

"Explain to me why I should care about the fates of a few parasites?" The dark figure questioned, "ones that I myself have been meaning to destroy."

"Vlad's men say that he killed Vlad the same way a normal human would swat a bug," the flunky smiled. "And a terrified townsman tells me that it took the hunter less than three seconds to kill Volos and his group."

"I see," the shadowed figure nodded. "You were right to bring this to my attention, we're sure that he wasn't brought in by the townsfolk?"

"My source is terrified because he's the one that informed Volos about the stranger's presence." The flunky smiled, "and I see it as a good sign that he allowed Vlad's men to live."

"So do I," the shadowed figure nodded. "It looks as if he's not here to cause trouble . . . find out his name, and send him an invitation to dine with me."

"At once sir"

"I meant it when I said invitation, Ayegore." The shadowed figure continued, "I don't want to antagonise an unknown power by being impolite."

"As you say sir," Ayegore nodded. "I'll tell the men not to anger him or be impolite."

"A meeting between equals," the darkened figure nodded. "It's been so long since I've been able to have one of those."

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Harry awoke late the next morning and walked down to the bar.

"Good morning sir," the bartender greeted him upon his appearance. "Did you have a good sleep?"

"Yes I did thank you," Harry gave a tired blink. "Is it too early for breakfast?"

"What would you like sir?" The woman smiled nervously, "we have soup or . . . or if you'd like something else I can get it."

"Soup is fine," Harry nodded. "Thank you."

"We all wanted you to know how sorry about we are about what happened with Volos," the woman eyed the sword on Harry's hip. "And I wanted you to know that the man who did it has left town."

"Don't worry about it," Harry grinned. "Why don't we both forget that last night happened."

"If that's your wish sir," the bartender agreed. "Who am I to think otherwise."

"Thank you," Harry gave a short laugh. "Now about that soup . . ."

"Right away sir"

Harry leaned back in his chair and smiled, the people were so friendly around here that he might be persuaded to stay longer than he had intended. And that thing with the vampires last night? He was sure

that it was just an isolated incident, not something likely to happen again.

"Will there be anything else sir?" The woman smiled nervously as she delivered the food, "some fresh bread perhaps?"

"I'm fine thank you," Harry smiled. "Is there anything to do in this town?"

"Nothing much sir," the woman's hands were trembling. "It's fairly isolated."

"I'm sure I'll find something," Harry grinned. "Thank you."

"Yes sir," the woman backed up a few steps and then rushed into the back room.

"Must have a lot to do this morning," Harry shrugged at his hostess's exit.

Harry finished his soup and decided to explore the town. It quickly became obvious that there wasn't much to see. The town held; a blacksmith's shop, an inn, a general store, and another unmarked shop.

Shrugging, Harry walked into the general store. If all else failed, he could always get some souvenirs for his friends.

"Hello," Harry called out as he entered the store. "Is anyone here?"

"I'm right here," an old woman's head popped out from behind the counter. "Just one moment."

"I'm just going to take a look around," Harry replied. "I'll be at the counter in a few minutes."

"Take your time"

Harry spent several minutes walking around the store, "why do you have so much black silk?"

"Hmm, Vlad liked it." The old woman replied, "he liked the whole prince of the night look."

"I thought they said his name was Volos?"

"He wasn't so into continuing stereotypes as Vlad was," the old woman shook her head. "He may have been a monster, but I don't know what I'm going to do with all that silk now that Vlad's gone."

"I'll take it," Harry sighed. "I'm sure I know someone that can use it."

"Bless you," the old woman gave a toothless smile. "You've saved my store."

"Always happy to help," Harry gave a weak grin. "I'll take some of those hard candies behind the counter also."

"Here you go sonny," the old woman pulled out a handful. "On the house."

Harry paid for his purchases and walked to the next store.

"Hello son, what can I do for you?"

"I was just looking around," Harry replied. "Is it possible to get a portkey here?"

"Why do you ask?" The shopkeeper asked wearily.

"This shop sells other magical items," Harry shrugged. "I was hoping that you would have portkeys too, or at least know where I can get them."

"I'm afraid that I don't have those," the old man shook his head sadly. "I do have some other things that you might be interested in though."

"What?" Harry sighed.

"Let me show you," the old man pulled a small trunk out from under the counter. "A complete Hunter's kit, never been used."

"What's a complete Hunters kit?" Harry's eyebrows were touching.

"Everything a Hunter of the Supernatural could possibly need when traveling through the area." The old man smiled. "Silver weapons, wooden stakes, a portable potions library, lock picks, and many more things. It also comes with a comprehensive research library."

"Fine," Harry nodded.

"And since you've decided to by the complete Hunter's kit," the old man smiled. "Allow me to suggest a few more items that you'll need if you're traveling through the area."

"I thought you said the Hunter's kit had everything I would need?" Harry smirked.

"That's what the advertisement says," the old man agreed. "But you don't seem like the kind of man that would trust your life to a bunch of marketers."

"Ok, what else." Harry sighed again.

"Some more books," the old man piled the tomes on top of the trunk. "And a lot more potions ingredients, including several that are only found in this area. The old man rummaged around in the back, I would also suggest that you purchase these potions."

"What are they?"

"Blood replenishing potions," the old man shrugged. "You'd be surprised how many I sell."

"Fine," Harry nodded. "Anything else."

"One more thing," the old man pulled out a worn leather bound book. "This book is filled with useful spells and curses, you might not need it for dealing with supernatural threats but it will certainly aid you in dealing with normal wizards."

"Thank you," Harry nodded. "Anything else?"

"No," the old man shook his head. "Nothing else."

"Then I'm going to take this back to my room and go through it," Harry hefted his load. "It's a good thing my pack is bottomless."

"That it is lad," the old man chuckled. "That it is."

Harry walked back to his room and spent the remainder of the day reading through his new books and cataloging his new items. Finally getting everything situated the way he wanted it, Harry pulled out his new spell book and started to read.

A muffled knock broke Harry's concentration and caused him to look towards the door. "What is it?"

"I have an invitation for you sir," the bartender's voice called through the door.

"One moment," Harry got up and opened the door. "What's this about an invitation?"

"The Count has asked you to dine with him and has offered you a room for the night," the woman smiled nervously. "He wished you to know that he has nothing but respect for you and hopes that you will accept."

"How do I get there?" Harry asked calmly.

"He has also sent his carriage." The bartender replied, "with the instructions that they will wait until doomsday for your answer."

"Who is this Count?" Harry wanted all the facts before he decided what to do.

"He's the vampire that controls most the region," the woman's hands started to tremble. "But he's not so bad as Volos was, I don't think he wants to fight sir."

"Why?"

"Because he's being much more polite than he would be if he wanted to fight you," the bartender did not want to be alone with this man for any more time than she had to.

"Tell the Count's me," Harry paused. "Tell them that I would be happy to accept the Count's kind invitation, and that I shall be down in a few minutes."

"Yes sir," the woman sagged in relief. "I'll tell them."

Harry closed the door and spent a few moments insuring that everything was in its proper place. Shouldering his pack, Harry walked down the steps.

"Are you the Count's guest sir?" A man in red and black livery asked politely.

"Yes," Harry nodded. "I am, why didn't you give me the invitation yourself?"

"I didn't want to seem rude sir," the man kept his tone of respect. "Confronting you in your own room could have been seen as aggressive by some."

"I see," Harry nodded. "How long will it take us to get to my meeting with the Count?"

"It shouldn't take too long sir," the man replied as he opened the inn's door for Harry. "A few hours at most, depending on the weather."

"Thank you," Harry nodded as he stepped into the carriage.

"One more thing sir," the guard paused before closing the door. "May I have your name?"

"Black," Harry sat back in the plush cushions. "My name is Mister Black."

"Thank you sir"

"If only Hermione could see me now," Harry muttered to himself as he pulled out another book to read on the trip. "She'd be thrilled that I'm reading so much."

Harry soon lost himself in the book and in what seemed like no time at all, he felt the carriage pulling to a stop.

"We're here sir," the driver called down respectfully. "I've taken the liberty of having the staff announce your arrival."

"Thank you," Harry got out of the carriage and stretched. "Where's this meeting?"

"Right this way sir"

Harry followed the man into the main entrance hall where they were greeted by a distinguished looking man in black and red silk.

"It's a pleasure to finally meet you Mr. Black," the Count dipped his head in respect. "I am the Count."

"It's a pleasure to meet you as well," Harry saw no reason to be impolite. "Though I do wonder why you wished to meet with me?"

"Come this way," the count led him to a small dining room. "Normally I would have used the larger dining room, but I'm told that you're not the kind of man that will be insulted if I don't use a table that will seat one hundred."

"No," Harry chuckled. "I'm not."

"Have a seat," the Count motioned towards a chair. "What would you like to eat?"

"Anything is fine," Harry sat. "Thank you for the hospitality."

"And thank you for allowing me to extend it," the Count smiled. "The cook gets so few chances to show off his talent."

"Then I'm glad to give him the opportunity," Harry smiled.

"Allow us to get down to business Mr. Black," the Count took a sip from his wineglass. "I would like to start out by thanking you for removing Vlad and Volos, they have been problems for quite some time now."

"It wasn't a problem," Harry took a sip from his own glass. "Though I am curious why you're so happy to see them gone."

"One of my hobbies is making wine," the Count smiled. "Including the glass you're drinking right now. Every year the vines will produce grapes, I don't harvest the grapes by cutting the vines because that would spoil next year's crop. We do not need to kill Humans to get our blood, the glass I'm drinking came from the cook yesterday and it's just as good as it would be fresh. Vlad and Volos did not understand that, they did not understand that the peasants outnumber us by at least one hundred to one and that we exist only as long as we aren't too much of a burden."

"I see"

"They were a danger to all of us," the Count smiled. "It is no longer the old days when vampires could do as they pleased, it is a new era that demands new methods."

"Why didn't you take care of them yourself?" Harry asked mildly.

"There is unfortunately one of me and many small problems," the count shrugged. "And taking a personal interest would have been seen as a sign of weakness by those that are unhappy with the new rules."

"I'm glad I could have been some help in solving your problem," Harry nodded.

"Would you be willing to help with another problem Mr. Black?" The Count smiled, "I would be willing to reward you handsomely."

"What problem," Harry held up a hand. "I'm only agreeing to hear you out."

"That's all I ask," the Count nodded. "I have a werewolf problem, someone in one of the villages not far from here has been infected and I need them to be found and eliminated."

"I'm not going to kill someone just because they turn into a wolf during the full moon," Harry's voice was flat. "One of my best friends is a werewolf."

"Good," the Count smiled. "Because I don't want you to kill them for being a werewolf, I want you to kill them for the murder of several of their neighbors."

"What happened?"

"I provide everyone of my towns with a jail," the Count shrugged. "This serves more as a place to safely have one's change than anything else, most of the inns are also equipped with safe rooms as well as several of the houses. This wolf has not chosen to use any of them, what's worse is that there have been a few cases where it locked itself in a house with innocent people. No Mr. Black, I do not have anything against werewolves but I do take my responsibility to protect my subjects very seriously."

"Why not give them wolfsbane potion?" Harry asked, "it may not cure the transformation but it does make it less dangerous."

"Wolfsbane?" The Count leaned back in his chair, "I'm unaware of any potion by that name."

"It doesn't cure them, but it does make the transformation a bit easier and it keeps them from being affected by the dementia."

"And you know where I could get this potion?" The Count seemed delighted by the prospect.

"I have a friend that I suspect can brew it," Harry nodded. "If she cant . . . if she can't, then I have a few more people I can contact."

"Wonderful," the Count gave a satisfied nod. "And something I will be delighted to provide. But not, I fear something that will help me with my current problem."

"I'm not sure what I can do," Harry exhaled. "But I'm willing to go to this town and look around."

"Thank you Mr. Black," the Count sagged in relief. "I am eternally grateful for your assistance in this matter. There is a full moon tonight, if we hurry we can have you in position before the beast starts it's hunt."

"How am I going to get to this village?"

"I'll have a portkey made," the Count nodded. "Is there anything you require?"

"Nothing I can think of," Harry shook his head. "Thank you for the offer."

The Count left the room and returned a few moments later with a small bottle and a two links of chain.

"I would suggest that you coat your weapons with this before you start," the Count handed over the small bottle. "It will magically coat them with silver. The chain is the portkey, just say Wolf and it will activate. Say Count and it will return you to this castle. Good luck my friend."

"Thank you." Harry spent a few moments coating his weapons, then took a deep breath. "Wolf."

Harry appeared in the town square next to a small fountain. Taking a seat on the side of the fountain, he looked around.

"Not afraid of the wolf?" A man with long matted grey hair and yellowed fingernails rasped out. "You should be."

"Why?" Harry turned just in time to watch the man change. "Damn."

The wolf lunged for Harry's throat and he just managed to get his arm up intime to save his life. Screaming in pain, Harry frantically grabbed for his wand.

The wolf made an odd keening whimper and it's grip began to loosen, Harry rolled so that he was on top of his attacker and his had closed around the handle of his Pugio. Savagely stabbing the beast, Harry did not let up until it regained it's human form.

Collapsing, Harry mustered the last of his strength. "C . . . Count."

"Mr. Black?" The Count rushed over to help his friend, "you're injured."

"Only thing I could think of doing was shoving my arm in his mouth," Harry coughed. "Kept his jaw busy so he couldn't bite me anywhere else."

"Yes, I'm afraid that he may have crushed the bones." The Count cradled his friend's head, "you've been bitten by a werewolf."

"S' not so bad, I can always have a friend make me Wolfsbane." Harry managed a weak grin. "You were right, he was a monster, he walked up to me and started to talk and smiled before his change."

"I won't let you turn into a wolf Mr. Black," the Count made a small cut on his wrist and let the blood drip down into Harry's mouth. "Forgive me for what I am about to do."

Harry's body began burning and he arched his back, darkness began clouding his vision and everything went black.

"You're awake?" A young female voice cried out joyfully, "I have to go awake the Count."

"Murgle," Harry replied.

"I'm happy to see that you're well my friend," the Count walked into the room.

"I seem to recall you giving me some blood," Harry forced his voice to stay level. "Am I a Vampire."

"No," the Count took a seat. "When I gave you blood, one of three things was supposed to happen. One, you would become werewolf. Two, my power would overcome that of the wolf's and you would have become a Vampire. And Three, you had a very small chance of remaining human."

"So I'm human?"

"No," the Count smiled. "And you're not a werewolf either, you're . . . something else."

"Something else?"

"Your senses are a bit higher than a normal human would be, your strength and especially your stamina have also gone up." The Count gave a confused shrug, "you will not transform, I've already checked and found that you have no adverse reaction to silver or sunlight. To be quite frank, I have no idea how this could have happened."

"Anything else?" Harry's heart beat returned to normal.

"You may be fond of having your meat rare if you were not before," the Count shrugged. "I don't know, I would suspect that if you ever wish to become an animagus then your form would be that of a wolf. Or perhaps you would also have the form of a wolf. You my friend are something entirely new and unique."

"Great," Harry muttered sarcastically. "Just frigging wonderful."

"I am sorry," the Count frowned. "And if there is any way I can make amends . . ."

"Don't worry about it," Harry waved it off. "The past is in the past, did you learn anything about the wolf?"

"Yes," the Count nodded. "His name was Fenrir Greyback, a death eater that was also known as 'the werewolf who kills for fun' and I dearly wish that I knew what he was doing here."

"Probably trying to recruit more death eaters," Harry guessed. "I can't think of any other reason."

"Neither can I," the Count shrugged.

"What time is it?"

"It's nearly noon," the Count replied. "Why?"

"Because I had better get to my next destination," Harry sat up. "Do you know where I can get a portkey to Bulgaria?"

"I'll make you one myself," the Count offered. "Are you sure that you don't need more rest?"

"Positive," Harry nodded. "Being sick in bed is no way I want to spend my vacation."

"The count handed back a small silver badge," this is your portkey to Bulgaria. "It is also a permanent portkey back to my castle and a badge to show your status as this region's premiere Law Enforcement Officer."

"Thank you," Harry accepted the badge. "How do I activate it?"

"To return, tap it three times with the tip of your wand or say the phrase 'I wish to see my friend the Count.'"

"And to go to Bulgaria?" Harry asked.

"Before I tell you that, may I ask you to do me one more favor?"

"What?" Harry's face became expressionless.

"Would you be willing to put me in contact with the potion maker that can make Wolfsbane?"

"Of course," Harry nodded. "Floo the Professor and ask for Henchgirl."

"Thank you my friend," the Count smiled. "To go just say the word 'Veela.'"

"Goodbye," Harry gathered his things. "Veela."

"Goodbye my friend," the Count walked towards the fireplace and threw in a handful of floo. "Professor."

"Yes?" Girl's head appeared in the flames, "what can I do for you?"

"Are you Henchgirl?" The Count asked politely.

"Yes," HENCHGIRL nodded. "What do you need?"

"Can you brew wolfsbane potion, and if you can would you be willing to sell me large amounts of it?"

"It's very expensive," HENCHGIRL frowned. "But I can do it."

"Money means nothing," the Count waved off her objection.

"Are you sure you want me doing it?" HENCHGIRL asked nervously, "I am a master but . . ."

"But Baron Black said you were the best in Europe." The Count nodded, "so of course you'll charge ten percent more than usual."

"Baron Black?" HENCHGIRL's eyes widened as she registered the rest of the sentence, "ten percent?"

"Twenty percent then," the Count nodded. "You drive a hard bargain."

"Ok," HENCHGIRL nodded. "When do you need it and how much do you need?"

"I will need monthly doses for thirty individuals," the Count smiled. "I will also need to know where I can deposit Baron Black's revenues."

"Revenues?" HENCHGIRL looked puzzled.

"Yes," the Count nodded it was the perfect thing to do with Vlad and Volo's lands and possessions. "He left before he could tell me where the gold from his lands and business were to be deposited."

"I'll speak to the Professor," HENCHGIRL nodded. "I think he knows which bank Mr. Black uses."

"I am eternally in your debt," the Count bowed. "Now if you will excuse me, matters of the state demand my attention."

AN: It was pointed out that Harry faced the dragon in the first task and not the third, let's just say that Spence is an idiot and Harry wasn't paying attention. If you forgot, Harry's clothes can change into

different outfits. He just hasn't chosen to use it before now. I've been planning the Vamp death in the bar since the beginning of the story, it's good to finally get it written out. It may not have been blind luck, but I think that incapacitating three vamps with a cosmetic charm is good enough. The death of the werewolf has been planned for almost as long. I was very tempted to have the wolf kill Harry, just to see the reaction. I could have even made it all a dream and said that it was a Dallas reference, it would have ruined months of planning but it would have been fun. The reason why the Count was so friendly towards Harry is because he saw Mr. Black as an equal and he was lonely, you've heard the phrase, 'it's lonely at the top.' And Yes, I made Mr. Black a Baron just so I could title this chapter the Black Baron . . . be happy I didn't name him 'Mr. Red' or you would see this joke more than once.

Veela can be Friendly

"Hello Madeye," Remus nodded to the older man. "Any reason you came early?"

"Had something to tell you," the old Auror nodded. "And I wasn't sure if you'd want others around when I did."

"What is it," Remus paled. "Is it about Harry?"

"No," Moody shook his head. "It's about the man who bit you."

"What do you need to know about him?" Remus frowned, "I don't know much I was just a kid when it happened."

"I don't need to know anything about him." Moody gave a terrifying smile, "he's dead."

"What? How?"

"Looks like he was out recruiting," Moody shrugged. "And he had the misfortune to run across Mr. Black."

"How did he die?" Remus asked with morbid curiosity.

"Not sure," Moody shrugged. "I'm told that he was poisoned and stabbed, but my sources aren't the best in that part of the world so I could be wrong."

"But you're sure he's dead?"

"I'm sure," Moody nodded. "Of that I'm positive."

"Thank you," Remus closed his eyes. "It's good to know that he can't hurt anyone else."

"Figured it might be," Moody nodded. "Goodbye Remus."

IIIIIIII

Harry arrived in an empty town square and looked around, most of the businesses seemed to be closed but one of the shops appeared to be open. Figuring that the shopkeeper would know of a suitable place to get a room, Harry walked in.

A bell rang as Harry opened the door and from the back of the shop he heard a faint, "just a moment."

"Ok," Harry replied.

"Now then," the shopkeeper smiled. "What can I do for you? Mr. . . ."

"Black," Harry smiled. "I was hoping that you would know of a hotel or some other place that I can get a room?"

"You came a bit later than I expected," the man shrugged. "But you've still got time, have a seat . . . it won't be long."

"Thank you." Harry sat down, glad that the shopkeeper was arranging a place for him to stay. "How long do you . . ."

The bell on the front door rang, interrupting Harry's question and admitting several cloaked figures.

"Right on time," the shopkeeper smiled. "I have your supplies ready, do you want to pay now or have me send you a bill?"

"Send us a bill," a young female voice answered. "I'm surprised that you're not alone, they usually try to avoid us."

"He's not from around here," the old man replied. "Not a bad fella though."

"Oh?" The woman turned to look at the seated Harry, "you look familiar."

"I have that kind of face," Harry gave a nervous smile.

"He's Gabrielle's savior," another female voice spoke up. "I recognise him from her pictures . . . he looks a bit older now than he was then."

"Why are you here 'arrie?" The lead woman gave an unseen smile.

"You can see through my disguise huh?" Harry sighed, "I came because I was curious about the place that Victor came from."

"That silly field is nothing to one that possesses our . . . talents," the woman nodded. "Where are you staying?"

"I'm not sure," Harry shrugged. "The shopkeeper was going to find me a place to stay."

"Then you must stay with us," the woman settled the matter. "It is the least we can do for Gabrielle's famous savior."

"I wouldn't want to be a burden," Harry smiled. "How do you know Gabrielle?"

"It is no burden, I insist that you stay with us, Gabrielle is our cousin." The woman took his hand, "and our cousins would never forgive us if we let you go off and stay in a dirty inn when you could have stayed with us."

"Alright," Harry nodded. "I wouldn't want to cause you any trouble."

Harry stayed with his new friends for several days until finally after a long goodbye, Harry managed to leave their hospitality and get on with his vacation.

Staggering into town, Harry walked into the nearest open businesses and walked painfully to the bar.

"Afternoon," the bartender greeted. "Something I can do for you?"

"Yes," Harry's jaws were clenched in pain. "I'm going to need to speak with a Healer of some sort."

"I'm a Healer," the man at the end of the bar spoke up. "What can I do for you?"

"I think I might have broken something in my waist," Harry replied in a hiss. "And I feel a bit sick to my stomach."

"One moment," the Healer waved his wand and frowned in concentration. "You're right about the pain in your waist, it looks like you have several hairline cracks in your pelvis."

"Oh," Harry groaned. "What about the fact that I feel sick?"

"Dehydration," the Healer replied. "Drink these two potions and you'll be fine."

"Thank you," Harry downed the Potions. "Now does anybody know where I can arrange transportation to Sofia?"

"Right here," the bartender spoke up. "The bar doubles as the travel agency, few other things too."

"How much?"

"Twenty Levs," the bartender pulled out a glass marble. "Do you need anything else?"

"No," Harry replied, accepting the marble. "One sec . . ."

"Thank you," the bartender smiled accepting payment. "Have a good journey."

"Thank you." Harry managed a weak smile just before the Portkey pulled him away.

"Wasn't that the guy that went off with that group of Veela a few days ago?" One of the random bar patrons asked quietly.

Eyes widened as the men considered the question and the bar was shrouded in silence until the bar tender licked his lips and asked, "what were his injury's?"

"As I said." The Healer spoke to the spellbound group, his voice filled with awe. "A cracked pelvis and a severe case of dehydration."

"How do you suppose that happened?" The bartender asked quietly.

"Lots of ways, for example." the Healer's eyes widened. "It couldn't be . . ."

"You don't mean?" The bartender blinked, "he can't be human."

"Did anyone get his name?" The Healer asked excitedly.

"Black," an old man spoke up from the back of the room. "When he visited my shop, he told me his name was Black."

The bar patrons were frozen in shock, eyes widened even further.

"Well," the bartender's moistened his lips. "I suppose it makes sense, if anyone could survive a pack of veela, it would have to be the mysterious Mr. Black."

IIIIIIII

"Good afternoon sir," a uniformed man greeted Harry upon his arrival. "Is this your final destination?"

"No," Harry was still feeling a bit tired and sore from his time with the veela. "I'm going on to Moscow."

"If you like, I can arrange that sir."

"That would be fine," Harry nodded. "How much?"

"Fifty levs," the man smiled.

"Fine," Harry paid for the portkey. "How long until it activates?"

"Just say Moscow and you will be on your way"

"Thank you," Harry gave a weak smile. "Moscow."

Harry did not enjoy the trip to Moscow and he made a silent vow to learn some other means of transportation besides portkeys and floo.

"Purpose of your visit?" A plain faced woman in a drab uniform asked in a board tone.

"Meeting a friend," Harry yawned.

"Your name?"

"Black," Harry yawned again.

"First name?"

"Mister," Harry smiled.

"You may pass through"

"Thank you," Harry popped his neck as he walked through the entry gate.

Behind him, the woman calmly put up a 'next window' sign and left to inform her supervisor.

Harry pulled his zippo out of his pocket and found a quiet place to have a conversation.

"Professor?" Harry called into the small flame, "are you there."

"I'm here Mr. Black," the Professor smiled. "Thanks to your generosity in promoting Henggirl's potion making talents, we will be able to meet you sooner than we had hoped."

"Great," Harry smiled. "How soon?"

"Sometime after dark local time," the Professor smiled. "We could get there earlier but we felt it prudent to go slowly on the shake down cruise."

"Whatever you want," Harry nodded. "I was planning on spending a bit more time here, but if you're early then I guess I'll have more time to visit a few other places."

"Excellent," the Professor nodded. "If I might make a small suggestion . . ."

"What's that?" Harry smiled.

"Why don't you travel with Henggirl and I?" The Professor gave a wide grin, "we were planning to take the next month or two to go on a prolonged expedition to test the Zeppelin."

"Where are you planning to go?" Harry shrugged.

"Egypt," the Professor gave a wide grin. "After that, wherever you wish to go. Henchgirl and I have no preferences."

"Sounds good," Harry nodded. "I'll spend the day looking around town and meet up with you tonight."

"See you then," the Professor gave one last grin before clicking his lighter closed.

"Now how am I going to spend the day?" Harry muttered to himself. Shrugging his shoulders, Harry walked out the front doors to hail a Taxi.

"Where to?" The cab driver asked in a disinterested tone.

"Show me around the city," Harry smiled. "I want to see anything you might think would interest me."

"You can pay?"

"And tip very well," Harry smirked. "I don't have much time in the city and I want to enjoy it."

"If you can pay," the man nodded.

Harry and his driver spent several hours touring the city, Harry saw things that he couldn't have imagined seeing in his childhood and delighted in the city's atmosphere.

"Thank you," Harry leaned back in his seat. "There is just one more place that I'd like to visit, then I'd like to find a good bar."

"Where?"

"I want to see the yellow building in Lubyanka," Harry smirked.

"No problem, it's not so far." The driver nodded. "After that I know of a very good bar, very classy."

"Thank you," Harry smiled. "Tell me when we're there."

"We're there," the driver nodded. "As I said, very close. Look to the left."

"Wow." Harry shook his head, seeing it on the television did not do the old building justice. "I never expected to see it like this, it doesn't seem the same without the statue in front of it."

"It's a bit strange." The driver agreed, "the bar now?"

"Yes," Harry nodded. "I have a bit of time to kill, and I can't think of a better way to kill it."

"It will be a few minutes until we arrive," the driver offered. "Relax."

The driver stopped the cab in front of an unremarkable building, "it doesn't look like much. But inside, it is very fancy."

"Thank you," Harry pulled out his wallet. "Do you have any currency that you'd like to be paid in?"

"US Dollars," the driver smirked. "If possible, if not . . ."

"No problem," Harry handed over a few twenty dollar bills. "Thank you."

"Tell them that Danya brought you," the driver shrugged. "They give me a finders fee for bringing you."

"Alright," Harry nodded.

"Goodbye," the driver rolled up his window and sped off.

Harry walked through the building's double doors and was stopped by an elegantly dressed man in a dark suit.

"Can I help you?"

"Danya told me that this was a good place to get a drink," Harry smiled.

"Name?"

"Mister Black"

"I . . . see," the man in the dark suit nodded. "He's been waiting for you, table in the back corner."

"Ok," Harry approached the back table cautiously.

"Have a seat," the old man at the table nodded. "I've been expecting you."

"Why?" Harry took a quick look around the room.

"Because I know the merchants and they sometimes tell me things," the old man shrugged. "So sit and enjoy yourself."

"Thank you," Harry sat. "Mr?"

"Winter," the old man gave a cold smile. "Have some vodka, I had them bring out a bottle of Posolskaya and I don't want to drink it myself."

"I'd also like to get something to eat if I can," Harry accepted the glass.

"I'll have them bring something out," the old man downed his glass and poured another.

"Thank you," Harry downed his glass. "Why did you want to see me?"

"To give you this," the old man handed over a worn leather bound book. "Weather magic, works best during the winter but it can be used every day of the year."

"Thank you," Harry accepted the book.

"I owed them a favor," the old man shrugged.

"Thank you all the same." Harry smiled.

"Enjoy your night," the old man stood up. "I'm afraid that I must be going."

"Goodbye," Harry raised his glass in salute. "And have a pleasant evening."

"I shall," the old man nodded. "And thank you Mr. Black."

IIIIIIII

"Hello?" Laetus Lovegood, Publisher and Editor of the Quibbler appeared in front of a large bronze faceless statue.

"Hello," a man greeted him. "Who might you be?"

"My name is Lovegood, I'm a reporter."

"O . . . k"

"I was hoping to ask some questions about a man named Mr. Black," the odd man smiled. "Perhaps you've heard of him."

"That's him," the local indicated the statue. "Local legend says that if you pat the statue's right foot then you'll be lucky with women, and if you pat it's left foot then you'll get a healthy child."

"Really?" Laetus looked up at the statue in astonishment, "how long have they said that?"

"Bout a day now," the local shrugged. "Tradition has to start somewhere."

"I couldn't agree more," Laetus nodded. "Why did it start?"

"Well," the local sat down. "Few days ago, Mr. Black came to town and then left town with a pack of veela soon afterwards."

"That is impressive," Laetus nodded.

"I'm not finished," the local smirked. "He came back a few days later, had a bruised pelvis and he looked like he had been doing some sort of strenuous activity."

"That's to be expected," Laetus shrugged. "So what?"

"Six hours later, three veela came into town." The Local's smile widened, "they were so tired that their normal charm wasn't so strong and one of them mentioned that the others were still asleep."

"I . . . see," Lovegood's eyes widened.

"Yep," the local nodded. "That's why we put up the statue, any man who can wear out a dozen veelas deserves to have his own statue."

Mr. Black and The Dozen Veela

by Laetus Lovegood

There exists a town in one of Bulgaria's more remote regions that has two unusual features. The first is the fact that it is located near a large concentration of veela, the second is that it boasts a large statue of Mr. Black. Locals believe that this statue grants special powers over matters of love . . .

. . . Mr. Black returned to town to greet a group of shocked towns folk . . .

. . . it was only after the exhausted veelas shared their story that the true nature of the events was realised . . .

IIIIIIII

"Sir, Black has met up with a small man and is leaving the country."

"Did he do anything of interest while he was here?"

"We're not sure sir," he shrugged. "He lost the men assigned to follow him, we do know that he visited headquarters."

"Do you know what he was doing there?"

"No sir," the man shook his head. "We don't."

"Then tell me something you do know"

"He told the customs agent that he was meeting a friend," the man began. "He was later seen drinking with the General."

"I see"

"Sir?"

"The General has always been a patriot, but not in the usual sense. He will protect the country from invasion from outside but he has always refused to pick a side in the internal conflicts."

AN: People have noted that Harry seemed to know about the first Vampire he killed, the one by accident. He doesn't, he's just assuming that it's one of the three he killed in the bar. For those of you who are wondering, Harry cracked his pelvis because . . . he fell. And the dehydration was because he was hungover or something. Take the scene with the veela whatever way you prefer, if you want it to be innocent then it is innocent. If you want it to have been something else then it can be something else, I just don't want to up my rating and I think it works better the way it is. Taking a taxi and going on a tour of a city is fun, but don't do it unless you're in a very cheap place. I use to take taxis everywhere when I lived in Bangkok and I got to know the city fairly well, if they weren't so cheap then I would have never had the chance. One last note, General Winter . . . Russia's greatest asset.

Hungarian Hexes : You may use the concept, just send me a link. You disabled your private messages so I couldn't reply.

Doctor Who?

Harry awoke and was for a moment disoriented. Looking around his strange surroundings, it took him a moment to remember stumbling out of the bar with the Professor the night before.

"Must have found me a hotel room," Harry shrugged as he pulled back the curtains to look out the window. "Or not . . ." Harry watched in shock as a passenger jet flew by, "where the hell am I now."

Quickly getting dressed, Harry walked out of the room and into the hall way.

"Hello," Henghgirl greeted him cheerfully. "Would you like some breakfast or something to cure a hangover?"

"Breakfast please," Harry nodded. "And I don't have a hangover this morning."

"Ok," Henghgirl smiled cheerfully. "What would you like?"

"Anything is fine," Harry smiled. "Or I can cook if it would be too much trouble."

"You can cook?" Henghgirl smiled, "where did you learn?"

"I didn't have the best childhood," Harry shrugged. "But one of the good things to come of it is my skill in cooking."

"Ok," Henghgirl shrugged. "Here you go."

"Wow," Harry picked up a fork and began to eat. "That was fast."

"Cooking is like making Potions," Henghgirl smiled. "After a while you start to learn tricks to make it go easier . . . it also helps that I'm a witch and I can use magic to make things go faster."

"I suppose that makes sense," Harry nodded. "You wouldn't have any books of domestic charms to help with cooking would you?"

"Not with me no," Henghgirl shook her head. "But I'll try to find some."

"Don't bother," Harry smiled. "I'll be able to find something when we touch down."

"Ok," Henchgirl's cheerful attitude returned.

"You haven't seen my watch have you?" Harry rubbed his wrist, "I couldn't find it when I woke up."

"well," Henchgirl bit her lower lip. "Maybe you should talk to the Professor about that."

"I'll ask him then," Harry stood. "Do you need any help with the dishes?"

In response, Henchgirl waved her wand and caused them to disappear. "Nope."

"Ok," Harry chuckled. "I'll go talk to the Professor then."

"Bye"

Harry walked down the hall and through the door that Henchgirl had indicated.

"Have you seen my watch?" Harry blinked the sleep out of his eyes. "I could have sworn that I put it on the bedside table."

"What?" The Professor looked up, "oh right. It's in that box, and that box over there and some of it's on the table behind you."

"What?" Harry stared in shock at the tiny parts, "why did you take my watch apart?"

"Henchgirl and I wanted to see how it worked," the Professor shook his head. "And right off the bat we saw several places that could be improved upon."

"They said that it was indestructible when I bought it," Harry stared at the small parts in shock. "They said that it could survive anything."

"Yes," the Professor nodded. "Henchgirl is on the floo having a word with them about false advertising."

"What am I suppose to use now?" Harry's shock overrode his anger.

"Henchgirl and I built you a new watch," the Professor held up a watch that bore a strong resemblance to his old watch.

"Thanks," Harry tried it on. "How soon till we get to Egypt?"

"Few hours," the Professor shrugged. "Why?"

"I'm worried that I won't have enough time to do any of the other things that I wanted to do on my vacation."

"You've got plenty of time." The Professor smiled, pointing to Harry's new watch.

"Why?" Harry had to suppress the sudden urge to leap out the nearest open window.

"Because I added in a few features to give you extra time," the Professor smiled. "Pull out the knob on the side and time stops, twist it clockwise and time will go forward at an accelerated rate."

"Why would I want it to go forward?" Harry hated to ask, but he knew that the question would torment him if he didn't.

"It gets you through boring meetings faster," the Professor nodded. "It's the only way I ever got through all those law suits."

"What law . . ." Harry bit his tongue, he really didn't want to know. "What I mean to say is, what other features did you build into the watch?"

"Oh, nothing much." The Professor shrugged, "if you turn the knob counter clockwise then time goes backwards."

"Don't you think that it's a bit dangerous to be playing with time and space?" Harry asked, "and don't you think that it's a bit irresponsible to be doing it to get me more vacation time?"

"Danger adds spice to life," the Professor replied. "And to answer your other question, no I don't think that it's irresponsible. If you want

to hear about irresponsible then let me tell you about the time that Hogwarts allowed one of their students to play with space time to get more classes."

"Never mind," Harry smiled weakly. "I withdraw my objections."

"I thought you might," the Professor nodded. "The watch has several other features, and I've taken the liberty of printing out a small booklet for you."

"Thank you," Harry took the booklet. "Have you had a chance to complete that Armor I asked for?"

"Why yes," the Professor nodded. "I just finished it."

"Can I see it?" Harry was getting use to his odd friend's way of looking at the world.

"Of course," the man nodded as he pulled out a black shimmery body suit. "It's worn under your clothes like a second skin. The main features are that it's charmed to keep a constant comfortable temperature, to keep you clean with out bathing, it hardens when subjected to impact, it's puncture proof, and it also provides quite a bit of spell protection."

"Wow," Harry was impressed. "Anything else?"

"A few other things," the Professor nodded. "For example if you wear it you can't be detected by most magical sweeps, and I've managed to make it self repairing . . . you know, nothing too special."

"Thanks," Harry took the suit. "If you need me, I'll be in my cabin reading."

"Don't forget the user's guide for the suit," the Professor tossed Harry another book. "I doubt you'll be able to figure out how to put it on or take it off without it."

"Thanks," Harry took the other booklet and left the room.

"Hello," Henchgirl smiled as Harry walked out of the room. "I just wanted to thank you."

"What for?"

"For recommending me," Henchgirl smiled. "People have never taken my potion making seriously, they've always thought that I would mess it up."

"No problem," Harry smiled. "I know two people who are really good at making potions, one of them is a greasy git that has the maturity of an angry two year old and the other is you."

"That really makes me feel good about myself," Henchgirl smirked.

"Maybe I should have stopped at no problem," Harry chuckled. "I'm glad I could have been of help."

"If there are any potions I can make for you, just let me know ok?"

"And if you need any ingredients, just come to me." Harry nodded, "or any books."

"Books?" Henchgirl perked up.

"Yes," Harry nodded. "I have quite a few of them, just picked up a new one on weather magic from a strange old man last night."

"Can I see them?"

"Sure," Harry nodded. "I'll just give you my pack and you can pick out what you need."

"Oh thank you," Henchgirl's grin threatened to split her face.

"Don't mention it," Harry shrugged. "That's what friends are for."

IIIIIIIIII

"Professor," Henchgirl rushed into the lab. "Look at this."

"What is it?" The small man looked up at his assistant, "can't you see that I'm in the middle of something?"

"A game of solitaire?" Henggirl replied sarcastically, "oh how very important."

"I'm busy with matters far above your feeble comprehension," the Professor replied smugly. "So be gone."

"Fine," Henggirl was enjoying herself. "Then I guess you don't want to see these books filled with rare and interesting charms that Mr. Black lent me?"

"WHAT?" The Professor turned away from his card game, "I demand that you show me."

"No"

"Show me"

"No"

"Show me"

"No"

"Show me"

"No"

"Show me"

"No"

"Please?"

"Ok," Henggirl nodded. "The best one has to be the book on weather magic, it's much more advanced than anything I've ever seen on the subject."

"Look at this," the Professor held up another book. "I can't believe he has something on this."

"You can't read that can you?" Henghgirl squinted at the cover, "what language is that anyway?"

"I don't know," the Professor admitted. "But look at the diagrams, they must be on wards of some sort."

"True," Henghgirl nodded. "I think that this one could be improved by a change in the angle of about three degrees."

"I was going to say two and a half," the Professor nodded. "But you do have a point there."

"So," Henghgirl looked around the lab. "Do we have everything we need to make a translator of some sort?"

"I'm not sure," the Professor shrugged. "Why don't we see if Mr. Black would be willing to loan us his glasses?"

"Works for me," Henghgirl nodded. "Let's go."

The two rushed down the hall and began frantically knocking on Harry's door.

"Yes?" Harry blinked at his friends, "what do you need?"

"We were wondering if we could borrow your glasses?" The Professor smiled innocently.

"Why?" Harry was instantly suspicious of the Professor's innocent smile.

"We want to study the charms to see if we can replicate them," Henghgirl shrugged. "We need something to translate the books you lent me."

"Oh," Harry nodded. "I suppose so, just bring them back."

"We shall," the Professor held out his hand.

"What is it?" Henghgirl asked upon seeing the odd look on Harry's face.

"I can see?" Harry looked around in shock, "I'm not using my glasses . . . but I can still see?"

"Hmmm," the Professor frowned. "This is more your area of expertise Henggirl."

"We'll investigate it later," Henggirl shrugged. "I doubt I could figure it out and trying would waste valuable research time."

"Right you are," the Professor nodded. "Come, we go."

"Don't forget to bring my glasses back when you're done," Harry called out after them. "I need them to read languages besides English."

"We shall," the Professor called over his shoulder.

"Bye," Henggirl called over hers.

"Thank you," Harry watched his two friends run off and shook his head in wonder.

IIIIIIII

"Mr. Black?" Henggirl's knocking on the door roused Harry from his nap.

"What is it?" Harry staggered towards the door.

"Here are your glasses back," Henggirl passed the item back. "And we'll be Alexandria in a few minutes."

"Thanks," Harry accepted the glasses. "Were you able to figure out the charms?"

"Yes," Henggirl nodded. "And we charmed a large piece of glass with the same translation charm."

"Good," Harry yawned. "What are we doing in Alexandria?"

"We're visiting the library," Henggirl replied. "There are supposed to be some old designs of machines."

"How old?" Harry asked curiously.

"Old enough that the original language on some of them is Classical Greek," Henggirl smiled. "I can't wait to get a look at them."

"I hadn't realised," Harry smiled. "Thanks for telling me."

"No problem," Henggirl nodded. "Thanks for lending us those books, they've been very helpful."

"In what way?" Harry yawned again.

"Well," Henggirl took a moment to think about the question. "The one that's been the most help so far is the weather magic. It helps out quite a bit in flying the Zeppelin, we can provide tail winds, or help shield it from bad weather, or . . ."

"Or?" Harry asked nervously.

"Or we can use it to make a cloud hide it from the muggles," Henggirl smiled nervously. "No more reports of UFOs, we can also make it so there's a bank of fog when we arrive."

"UFOs . . ." Harry bit his tongue, "why do we want a thick bank of fog when we arrive?"

"Because it's cool," Henggirl gave a satisfied nod. "That was my idea."

"O . . . k," Harry took a deep breath. "Is there somewhere I should be, or somewhere I could watch the landing?"

"Sure," Henggirl nodded. "Follow me."

Henggirl took Harry to the bridge and they both looked out in wonder as the city approached.

"Beautiful isn't it?" Henggirl whispered, "the view from so high up."

"Yes," Harry nodded. "It is, I am worried about one thing though."

"What's that?" Henggirl whispered back.

"The fact that the Professor is steering this thing," Harry replied.

Henchgirl glanced over her shoulder to watch the Professor erratically spinning a large stereotypical ship's wheel.

"Oh," Henchgirl nodded. "Don't worry about that, we set the zeppelin on autopilot before we began our approach."

"Then why is he still steering?"

"He said that there's no point in having a zeppelin if you can't play with it and pretend that you're the captain," Henchgirl shrugged. "I'm just annoyed that he's hogging it and not letting me have any fun."

"I . . . see," Harry shrugged. "Well if there's no danger in all of us dieing in a horrible fiery crash, then I don't see any reason to worry about it."

"That's the spirit," Henchgirl nodded.

"We've reached our destination," the Professor announced. "Shall we go down?"

"We're not going to land?" Harry frowned.

"Nope," Henchgirl smiled. "We've got a new invention to try out."

"What new invention?" Harry reminded himself that he hadn't been horribly injured by any of their new inventions in the past.

"It's a stationary transport system," the Professor smiled. "So long as the zeppelin remains stationary, "our system can get us to and from the ground with ease."

"What if the zeppelin moves?" Harry asked, "the wind will push it around if nothing else."

"I wouldn't worry about the wind," the Professor waved off Harry's objection.

"Then what happens if someone ports in or something?" Harry blinked, "couldn't they do something?"

"We've got wards to prevent that," the Professor smiled. "They'll go up as soon as we leave."

"This may sound like a stupid question," Harry licked his lips. "But is your new transport system able to go through wards?"

"No," Henchgirl shook her head. "Not these wards, nothing can get through them."

"Then," Harry frowned in confusion. "If the transport system can't get through wards, how do we get back to the zeppelin?"

"We . . ." the Professor and Henchgirl shared a look. "I guess we don't."

"I see," Harry nodded. "Wouldn't it be better to keep someone on the ship that can raise and lower the wards so that people can port in?"

"I suppose," Henchgirl nodded. "Not it."

"Damn," the Professor frowned. "I expect you to come back and let me have a turn in the library soon Henchgirl."

"And I'll take my turn watching the zeppelin after that," Harry nodded. "It's only fair that we share the responsibility."

"Ok," Henchgirl nodded. "Come on, I'll show you how to get down."

"Ok," Harry nodded. "Let's go."

Henchgirl led Harry down the hallway to a small room with a large ornate silver circle inlaid on the floor.

"This the Portkey Transfer Chamber," Henchgirl smiled proudly, "or PortTrans for short."

"How does it work?" Harry looked down at the strange device.

"It's similar to a portkey," Henchgirl began to lecture. "What it does it turn a small object on your person into a short range portkey, it then activates the portkey and sends you straight down to a safe landing area."

"How does it take you back up?" Harry blinked.

"It remotely activates the Portkey that took you down and causes it to bring you back up," Henggirl replied. "Some of the drawbacks are that you need a stationary landing area, no ports while the zeppelin is moving, and the fact that the range is so limited."

"Interesting," Harry nodded. "What does it turn into a portkey?"

"Anything you want," Henggirl smiled. "I wouldn't be surprised if you could turn your hair into a portkey, though we haven't experimented on that."

"Your hair?"

"It's a non living substance that you always have with you," Henggirl shrugged. "Like I said, we haven't experimented with it yet."

"What should I use as my portkey?" Harry smiled, "and how do I get it to bring me back?"

"Do you have your Zippo on you?" Henggirl blinked, "because that would be perfect."

"Yes," Harry nodded. "I do."

"Good," Henggirl nodded. "We've designed the system so that the two devices work well together, and it avoids accidental activation."

"Ok," Harry pulled out his Zippo. "How does it work?"

"To get back," Henggirl pulled out her own Zippo. "Open the portable floo connection and say the activation phrase."

"What's the activation phrase?"

"Anything you want," Henggirl shrugged. "What would you like it to be?"

"How about . . ." Harry grinned, "port me up."

"Ok," Henggirl nodded. "Why did you chose that?"

"Tradition," Harry shrugged. "Remind me to show it to you and the Professor, I think you'd get a kick out of some of the ideas they had in that show."

"Show?" Henggirl shrugged, "just step in the circle and we'll be on our way."

"Now what?" Harry looked around, "do I have to say an activation phrase?"

"Just a second," Henggirl spent a few moments fiddling with the controls. "Don't say it until I'm in the circle, the activation phrase is 'port us down' ok?"

"Ok," Harry nodded and waited until his friend was standing next to him. "Port us down."

The port felt similar to a normal portkey, the only difference being that the pulling sensation was in the soles of their feet rather than behind the navel.

The two of them appeared in front of a large ornate fountain in tiled courtyard.

"Well," Henggirl looked around. "Here we are."

"Where is here?" Harry asked with a puzzled grin.

"The library of Alexandria," Henggirl replied.

"Didn't it burn down a few thousand years ago?" Harry frowned as his mind brought up half forgotten lessons from primary school.

"They had to hide it to keep it from being destroyed and I guess that they haven't bothered to unhide it."

"Oh," Harry blinked. "I guess that makes sense."

"Let's go," Henggirl was bouncing up and down. "I can't wait to start reading about all the ancient devices."

"Ok," Harry trailed behind his perky friend.

Two massive bronze doors marked the entrance to the library and after walking past them, the two friends found themselves under a massive dome.

"Welcome to the library," an old man in a somber robe smiled in greeting. "Is there anything I can help you with?"

"Where are the engineering texts?" Henggirl's grin threatened to split her face, "and the potions texts?"

"Right through there in the eastern wing," the old man waved his hand to indicate the direction. "They're clearly marked."

"Thank you," Henggirl smiled. "I'll meet you in the reading room Mr. Black."

"Ok," Harry replied.

"Can I help you find anything?" The old man turned to Harry.

"Combat spells maybe," Harry shrugged. "Anything that might be useful to know."

"I think I might have an idea of what you're looking for," the old man nodded. "Come with me."

IIIIIIII

"Hello my friend," the Professor walked up to the table that Harry had been occupying. "Have you found anything interesting?"

"Few spells that might be useful," Harry nodded. "And a bit of medical magic."

"Excellent," the Professor smiled. "Henggirl mentioned that she found several ancient engineering texts, do you happen to know where they are?"

"I have them right here," Harry indicated a pile to his left. "I figured you would want to see them so I made sure that they didn't put them back on the shelves."

"Thank you," the Professor gave a wide grin. "Did you have a chance to peruse them?"

"I took a quick look," Harry nodded. "I didn't understand much but it was interesting to learn how long ago they could do some of the things in the texts."

"Isn't it," the Professor agreed.

"Did you have a chance to get any work done while you were on the zeppelin?" Harry smiled.

"Yes, I've managed to complete my latest invention," the Professor held up a small device. "I call it the Hex-Quarter."

"O . . . k," Harry looked at the small item that bore a vague resemblance to a silver cigarette case. "What does it do?"

"Remember how you asked Henchgirl to start work on a device that detects poison?" The Professor asked with a maniacal grin.

"Yes," Harry nodded.

"Well we've done it," the Professor smiled. "And I've also added in several other features, it can detect wards, has several forensic charms, several diagnostic charms, a database of plants and animals, and much much more."

"Wow," Harry was impressed. "How do you use it?"

"Well," the Professor held up the device. "You just open it and tell it what you want it to look for . . . I'll just have it use the poison and diagnostic charms and . . ."

"What?"

"Were you aware that your blood is one of the most poison substances known?" The Professor's eyes widened even more, "and that you have both werewolf saliva and vampire blood in your system?"

"Hmmm," Harry nodded. "I'm not sure about the poison, but don't worry about the werewolf and vampire stuff, it's been taken care of."

"I . . . see," the Professor stared down at his display. "Is there . . . I . . . hmmm."

"Excuse me?" A pretty young woman walked up and smiled at the two of them.

"Yes?" Harry looked up.

"Hello," the woman smiled. "I couldn't help but overhear your conversation . . . could I talk to you for a second."

"If you like," Harry shrugged.

"I'm the Doctor," she smiled.

"Who?"

"No relation," the Doctor smirked. "I was wondering if I could get a look at your blood? If half the things that your friend said are true then . . . then I think I may be able learn enough to buy my way back into polite society."

"What do you mean by that?" Harry frowned.

"I graduated in the top ten percent at my school," the woman sighed. "And I decided to become a Healer, I graduated near the top of that too."

"So," Harry shrugged. "I'm not seeing any problems yet."

"The problem is that I wanted to be the best Healer that I could be," the woman gave a bitter laugh. "So I decided to study Muggle techniques, that was a bit harder. But, I was smart and twelve years later I was a Doctor with a couple of specializations."

"I'm still not seeing any problems," Harry blinked.

"The problem is that a pure blood princess like me shouldn't know so much about Muggles," she frowned. "No one would let me treat them

because they were worried about being contaminated by the muggle techniques, what's worse is that I couldn't even work in the muggle world."

"Why not?"

"Being a pure blood means that I don't have a background that will stand up to the kind of investigation that most hospitals in the developed world would subject their doctors to."

"So you're here," Harry nodded.

"Living off daddy's money and doing research," the woman nodded. "Hoping to find something that will let me buy my way into a job where I can practice my skills."

"What do you want with me?" Harry decided to get to the point.

"Your friend said that you'd been bitten by a Vampire and a Werewolf," the Doctor's eyes lit up. "He also said that your blood was poison and you said not to worry about that."

"I said not to worry about the vampire and the werewolf," Harry corrected. "I'm not sure about the poison."

"I think that I might be able to make a medical breakthrough if you let me study your blood and body," the Doctor was one step away from getting on her knees and begging. "I'll do anything."

"How long do you need?" Harry smirked, "I don't have much time and the time I have is going to be spent traveling."

"I'll go with you," the Doctor replied. "I'll pay my way, I'll do anything."

"Alright," Harry nodded. "If my companions don't have any objections then you may accompany us Ms . . ."

"Just call me Doctor," the woman smiled. "You've already got a Professor and a Henchgirl, why not let your collection grow Mister?"

"Black," Harry smiled.

"I see," the Doctor giggled. "Thank you for having me."

AN: For those that don't know, the charge of the light brigade was an event that happened during the Crimean war. What happened is that for one reason or another, the light brigade charged into a valley of Russian guns. The Russians were shocked by the courage shown and thought that the men must have been drunk, it's an event that is fairly well known in England. Harry being able to see is because of the vampire werewolf thing, I'm including this note because I might forget to write it in later chapters. Yes the Greeks had machines, some of them were fairly sophisticated.

Tomb Raider

"Excellent idea," the Professor entered the conversation. "Why don't you let me show the Doctor to the Zeppelin and then Henchgirl and I can set her up with a laboratory."

"Ok," Harry blinked in surprise. "I didn't think that you were going to . . . if it's not too much trouble."

"No trouble at all," the Professor smiled. "Come with me Doctor."

"Alright," the woman nodded. "Though I'm surprised that you're accepting me like this."

"Just touch this Zippo," the Professor held out the small object. "And I'll activate the portkey."

"Portkey?" The woman touched the Zippo, "I thought you said Zeppelin?"

"Port me up," the two felt an odd pulling sensation in the crowns of their heads. "I did."

"What is this place?"

"Come with me," the Professor ignored her question. "Do you have any magical items with you?"

"A few," the Doctor nodded. "Why?"

"Put them in this box along with your wand," the Professor gestured towards a small box. "We need to make sure that they don't interfere with the charm matrix and crash the Zeppelin and kill us all."

"Kill us all?" The Doctor quickly tossed her wand and a pair of rings into the box.

"Hmmm," the Professor looked down at his Hex-Quarter. "You missed something."

"Oh," the woman nodded as she tossed in her earrings. "I almost forgot."

"Quite alright," the Professor closed the box. "Come with me."

"Where are we going?"

"I'm going to introduce you to my henchgirl, Henchgirl." The Professor replied with a grin.

"Henchgirl?" The Doctor had a strange look on her face.

"Yes?" Henchgirl stuck her head out into the hall.

"This is the Doctor," the Professor smiled. "She's going to study Mr. Black's blood."

"Why?" Henchgirl's nose wrinkled.

"It's poisonous," the Professor shrugged. "It also contains werewolf saliva and vampire blood."

"That is strange," Henchgirl nodded. "Do you think he'd give me a sample."

"I'm sure he would," the Professor nodded.

"I'll get the contracts," Henchgirl disappeared back into her room.

"Contracts?" The Doctor looked down at the Professor with a confused expression.

"Yes," the Professor nodded. "In effect they state that you are being hired to work as a researcher and that any discoveries belong to the company, and will be used to buy you shares in the company."

"Profits?" The Doctor smiled.

"You get a large share of any profits from anything you discover," the Professor nodded. "Along with a share of every other discovery, it also states that you will never betray or reveal the identity or secrets of Mr. Black or any of the other employees."

"Identity?" The Doctor asked with a raised eyebrow.

"Your real name is not the Doctor, mine is not the Professor, Henchgirl's is not Henchgirl, and I'm told that Mr. Black has a very embarrassing first name." The Professor smiled, "we all have our secrets."

"And you want to protect them," the Doctor nodded. "That sounds reasonable . . . to be honest, I'd be worried if you didn't have something like this."

"The Professor and I have both signed something similar," Henchgirl offered as she handed over the contract. "The only one that hasn't is Mr. Black."

"Why not," the Doctor asked as she scanned the contract.

"Two reasons," the Professor replied. "One is because he has more secrets, and if you look you'll see a clause about that."

"The other?"

"He's the boss," Henchgirl shrugged. "And while he may have a very relaxed way of running things, he's still the boss. Without his help, none of us would have anything to research."

"That sounds reasonable," the Doctor nodded as she signed the contract. "What now?"

"Now I fold it up and put it into the secure document storage," Henchgirl replied.

"And the two of us get your wand and items," the Professor smiled. "You won't have to relinquish them again."

"There wasn't any danger was there?" The Doctor began to laugh, "you just wanted to disarm me."

"Mr. Black may be able to kill several groups of hostile wizards before lunch without anyone's aid," the Professor shrugged. "But Henchgirl and I need all the help we can get."

"I think I'm gonna like you two," the Doctor shook her head. "I didn't even think about it until I realised that the two of you had me boxed in."

"We wouldn't have forced you to sign it," the Professor gave a weak smile. "But we had to be sure that you weren't one of Mr. Black's enemies."

"I told you that I understood," the Doctor smiled. "Like I said, I would have been worried if you hadn't done something. Growing up with my family . . . let's just say that they aren't the most easy people to get along with. Left with the idea to be careful of people's motives, accepting me with open arms would have just made me paranoid."

"I'm sorry," the Professor opened the box and handed it over to the Doctor. "What would you require for a good medical research laboratory?"

"Oh lots of things," the Doctor began reviewing her mental list. "The first thing I'd like is a good microscope."

"You wouldn't happen to know how to build one would you?"

IIIIIIII

"We've located Mr. Black master," Wormtail simpered.

"Where is he?"

"He's been spotted in Egypt master," Wormtail cowered.

"Take a team and destroy him," Voldemort commanded.

"Yes master," Wormtail cringed. "May I have permission to ask our allies for help?"

"You may," the Dark Lord nodded. "It's time they started earning their keep."

"Thank you master," Wormtail kissed the hem of the Dark Lord's robe. "Thank you."

"You're welcome Wormtail," the Dark Lord smiled. "CRUCIO."

IIIIIIII

"Excuse me," a man wearing a pith helmet spoke to get Harry's attention. "But you wouldn't happen to be Mr. Black would you?"

"I am," Harry nodded. "What can I do for you?"

"I'm Director Asim," the man held out his hand. "I work for the antiquities division."

"Mr. Black," Harry took the man's hand. "Nice to meet you."

"We were hoping that you could help us with something," the Director smiled.

"What do you need?"

"We're having trouble locating a tomb," the Director pulled out a file. "Our research shows that it has to be in this area, but we've been unable to locate it."

"I'm still not sure how I can help you," Harry frowned. "I don't have any idea how to find what you're looking for."

"Well," the Director gave a weak smile. "We were hoping that you could use your knowledge of wards to find it, I'm told that you are quite adept at using Mage Sight?"

"Oh," Harry nodded. "That I can do, I'd be happy to help."

"Excellent," the man nodded. "Now all we have to do is work out the contract."

"What contract?"

"Well," the man paused. "The standard contract that we use with Gringotts states that you get a third of the treasure and a third of the magical knowledge."

"Really?" Harry had heard his uncle talk about negotiations enough to know that you never took the first offer. "How interesting."

"But I see no need to use that contract with you," the man sagged. "How about equal shares?"

"How about I get any magical knowledge discovered," Harry suggested. "And access to any magical knowledge that you've previously discovered?"

"I'll have to talk it over with my superiors," the man stalled. "Would you be willing to share any knowledge you discovered?"

"Anything that wasn't too dangerous to be known," Harry agreed. "No offence, but I've had bad luck with government officials."

"I'll be back with an answer soon," the Director promised.

"Ok," Harry nodded, a bit surprised that things had gone so easily. "Take your time, I'll be here for another day or two before moving on."

Harry spent another hour reading through his stack of books before the Professor returned.

"Henchgirl and I spend a bit of time setting up the Doctor's laboratory," the Professor explained. "You won't believe the kinds of instruments that she had us create, those muggles are quite clever aren't they?"

"When you don't have magic you do other things," Harry nodded.

"Did anything happen while I was gone?" The Professor reached for another book.

"Some guy from the government came to ask me to look for some tomb," Harry replied. "Then we negotiated for a little while . . . you know how it is."

"No I don't," the Professor put down his book and picked up another. "I never learned to negotiate."

"Oh," Harry nodded. "Well, he offered me a price that was way too low and I countered with a price that was way too high, then he left so that he could pretend to talk to his superiors."

"Is that how it works?" The Professor was impressed, "I never realised."

"I'm fairly sure that's the way it works," Harry shrugged. "I've never had to do much negotiating in the past."

"Well . . . I'm sure everything will work out in the end," the Professor nodded. "Henchgirl and I wanted to visit the pyramids tomorrow, would you like to come with us?"

"Sure," Harry nodded. "Sounds like fun."

IIIIIIII

"I have met with Mr. Black," Asim looked around the room at his superiors.

"What did he say?" One of the fatter men wiped his brow.

"He told me that his price is half the treasure, all the magical knowledge, all the magical items, and access to all of our magical knowledge." Asim replied, "he added that he would be willing to share any magical knowledge with us after checking to ensure that it's not too dangerous."

"He can't be serious," the fat man's eyes shot open. "The goblins only demand a third."

"The goblins cant find this tomb," one of the others gently reminded. "And according to rumor, Mr. Black may have been around when it was found."

"Still," the fat man protested. "All the magic, he thinks he can screen through it and give us the few spells that he deems safe enough?"

"My guess would be that he knows something about the contents of the tomb," the other man replied. "Reports say that it is the resting

place for a very powerful court wizard . . . who knows what kind of dangerous it might contain."

"Half is better than nothing," Asim spoke up. "Some knowledge is better than none at all, Mr. Black has a history of generosity. He's done more to help the European governments in the last few weeks than anyone in the past five centuries."

"Do it," the fat man nodded. "Tell him that we agree to his terms . . . for any site that he discovers."

"I will sir," Director Asim nodded. "Does anyone else have anything they'd like to add?"

"Ask him if he'd be willing to help with the bandits in the desert," the Director of Magical Law Enforcement spoke up. "Better yet, warn him of the bandits in the desert and let him do the rest. I'm told he likes to pretend to have no idea what's going on around him, it's only polite to play along."

"I will," Asim nodded. "I have no doubt that I will be coming before you tomorrow to inform you of a magnificent treasure, good evening gentlemen."

IIIIIIIIII

The Professor woke early the next morning and promptly went back to sleep, four hours later he got up again and walked to the bridge.

"We're here," Henggirl greeted him cheerfully. "And now that you're awake, you can watch the zeppelin while we go to the pyramids."

"NO," the Professor disagreed. "I command you to watch the zeppelin."

"OK," Henggirl nodded cheerfully. "Thanks, I thought you'd want to stay up here after . . . you know, but if you don't."

"How dare you try to deceive me," the Professor wasn't a morning person. "I command you to go down to the pyramids."

"If that's what you want," Henghgirl managed to successfully hide her grin until she got to the Port – Trans chamber. "Sucker."

"Where's the Professor?" Harry looked around, "isn't he coming down with us?"

"He decided that I'd go down first," Henghgirl answered smugly. "And one of us will relieve him later."

"Ok," Harry nodded. "Is the Doctor coming?"

"She's already down," Henghgirl replied. "She said she wanted to pick up a few things for her lab."

"Ok," Harry shrugged. "Let's go."

"Yay," Henghgirl ran over to the pad and the two friends ported down to the see the great pyramids.

"Are you and the Professor interested in the way the pyramids were built?" Harry stared up at the great pyramid with wide eyes.

"To some extent," Henghgirl nodded. "It's interesting to see the way things were done in the past."

"That it is," Harry shook his head. "Shall we go in?"

"Ok," Henghgirl nodded. "Let's go."

The two friends entered the pyramid and gazed in wonder at the wonder of the king's chamber and the great gallery.

Moving on to the queen's chamber, the two friends discovered that they were not alone in the pyramid.

"Hello," Henghgirl smiled at the odd looking man. "How are you?"

"And why are you wearing a disguise field?" Harry added, fingering his wand.

"I'm fine, thank you." The odd man smiled at Henghgirl, "because I'm a goblin."

"Oh," Harry relaxed. "Sorry for being so abrupt, but I have quite a large number of people trying to kill me and I'm afraid that I get paranoid sometimes."

"Quite alright," the goblin nodded. "Are you just here to visit?"

"I am," Harry nodded. "Henchgirl's here to get an idea of how the place was built."

"Really?" The goblin perked up, "you wouldn't happen to be the Henchgirl? The one who travels around with the Professor and Mr. Black would you?"

"Yup," Henchgirl nodded. "And this is my friend, Mr. Black."

"Nice to meet you," Harry nodded.

"I'd like to get your opinion on something if I may," the goblin handed Henchgirl a parchment covered in notations. "It looks as if they may be a dead space behind this wall but I haven't found a way to prove it, or any entrance."

"I see what you mean," Henchgirl looked over the notations. "Maybe if we . . ."

"Mr. Black," Director Asim rushed into the chamber. "I'm so glad that I was able to find you."

"Hello Director Asim," Harry nodded. "How are you today?"

"I'm doing well," Asim smiled. "And I have some wonderful news."

"What's that?" Harry smiled.

"The government has agreed to your demands," the Director replied quickly. "All the magical items and knowledge, and half the treasure of any find you make."

"What about access to what you already have?"

"Copies are being made as we speak," the Director smiled. "And will be delivered after you find the tomb."

"Great," Harry nodded.

"Mr. Black," Henchgirl looked up from the parchment. "Would you mind using your mage sight?"

"Sure," Harry glanced around the room and focused on one spot. "I wonder what would happen if I . . ."

One of the walls seemed to shimmer before revealing a new entrance. After stepping through, the group looked around in wonder.

"You found it," the Goblin shouted in glee. "How remarkable."

"What is it?" Asim couldn't believe his eyes.

"Looks like a repository of basic spells," Harry glanced at the label on one of the jars. "And maybe a few potions that we can decode."

"You can read the labels?" Asim stared at the strange man in shock.

"Hmm," Harry looked up. "I'm sorry I wasn't paying attention, one of the workers wrote something on the wall and I was just reading that."

"What does it say?" Asim couldn't believe what was happening.

"It's rather dirty," Harry blushed. "I'd rather not say."

"Should I record this as a joint find for Mr. Black and Gringotts bank?" Asim glanced at the goblin and Harry.

"No," the Goblin shook his head. "I don't work for Gringotts anymore, I retired."

"You still deserve some of it," Harry protested. "We wouldn't have found anything without your help."

"You say that you're going to look for more?" The goblin gave a wide smile, "cut me in for an equal share and we'll call it all this even."

"Excellent," Harry smiled. "I was going to ask for your help and this just makes things easier."

"Really?" The goblin couldn't believe his ears, "why would you want my help?"

"Well," Harry began. "Correct me if I'm wrong but doesn't Gringotts do a lot of exploration of old tombs?"

"They do," the goblin nodded.

"And weren't you exploring this place," Harry smiled.

"I was," the goblin nodded again.

"And in doing so you show your competence," Harry finished. "I'd really like to have you along if you can be half as helpful in the future."

"I understand," the goblin nodded. "I'll be happy to help."

"Great, happy to have you along Mr . . ."

"Just call me Architect," the goblin replied. "It's the English translation of my name and it won't hurt my ears every time you try to say it . . . unlike most human attempts at my real name."

"Are you an architect?" Harry blinked.

"I'm trained as one," the Architect nodded. "And as a construction engineer, never got to do much more than simple maintenance and a few small expansions though."

"Why not?"

"No call for it," the Architect shrugged. "All the infrastructure is in place, why should we undertake major projects if there's no need for them . . . I just want to create one thing on my own."

"I see," Harry nodded.

"So I retired," the Architect shrugged. "And I travel the world looking at great works in stone, dreaming about the day I can build my own."

"Well," Harry licked his lips. "That's fairly similar to what my friends are doing."

"We travel the world looking at great engineering projects," Henggirl chipped in. "And Mr. Black travels the world complaining about how all he wants is a quiet vacation and why do those death eaters keep dieing in accidents that happen to take place in the same general location."

"I think I must have done something terrible in a past life," Harry lamented. "Like destroy a couple civilizations."

"We all have bouts of bad luck," Henggirl patted Harry's hand sympathetically. "Come Mr. Black, back to the Zeppelin."

"You still haven't thought of a name for it huh?" Harry shook his head, "let's go guys."

"Shouldn't we wait until a team gets here to secure the site?" Asim couldn't believe what was happening.

"No need," Harry squinted at some of the hieroglyphics. "Move out of the way."

The group of people left the room and Asim stared in shock as the wall closed up again, "how do we get back in?"

"Tell them the password is feck-ta," Harry replied. "Does anyone want to get some lunch before we go?"

AN: I am well aware that there would be tourists everywhere in real life.

Crushed Toad

"Auror Shacklebolt," Fudge strode into the room followed by his toad like Special Assistant. "Your team is assigned to my assistant for a classified mission outside the nation's borders."

"Yes sir," Shacklebolt nodded. "What happens if we get captured by the government of the country that we're entering?"

"Let me worry about the politics," Fudge snapped. "Do your job or I'll replace you."

"Yes . . . sir," Shacklebolt kept his face impassive. "May I ask what the mission is . . . sir?"

"We will be hunting a notorious criminal by the name of Mr. Black," Umbridge entered the conversation. "He's wanted for the murder of several prominent members of British society including Lucius Malfoy and we are going to bring him to justice."

"Mr. Black?" Kingsley was stunned. "You expect us to go against one of the most dangerous men in the wizarding world with only five Aurors?"

"You have your orders," Fudge turned to leave.

"Take hold of this portkey or end your career at the Ministry," Umbridge commanded.

"They say he doesn't kill Law Enforcement," Kingsley tried to reassure his team. "We should have a good chance of getting through this in one piece."

Trusting their leader's words, the Auror team took a deep breath and put their hand on the portkey.

IIIIIIIIII

Several Egyptian officials accompanied Harry and his group as they approached the supposed location of the hidden tomb.

"When did you discover that tomb over there?" Harry gestured towards the cliff face, "or that one?"

"Which tombs Mr. Black," Asim frantically searched for some sign.

"This one," Harry patted a seemingly bare wall. "I must admit that they used a rather . . . complex ward on this one."

"We haven't discovered it," Asim admitted. "I'll have some of the men mark it for further exploration."

"Great," Harry nodded. "How about this one?"

Asim sighed, that report he was going to have to write for his bosses was going to take forever.

Five hours, and forty three tombs later. Harry and his group finally arrived at the location.

"Here we are Mr. Black," Asim was confident that Mr. Black would find it in no time. "Do you see it?"

"Nope," Harry shook his head. "There doesn't appear to be any tomb here, could I see your notes?"

"Here's a copy of the original papyrus scroll along with the translation," Asim's heart dropped as he handed it over. The day was not a loss, especially after all the discoveries that Mr. Black had made. But after all that effort, not finding the original objective was . . . disappointing.

"Here's your problem," Harry put his finger on the parchment. "Your translator made a mistake here, this isn't the location of the tomb."

"It's not?" Asim perked up.

"No," Harry shook his head. "The tomb is with all the other wizard tombs, in the Valley of Magicians."

"The Valley of Magicians?" Asim repeated dumbly.

"Yup," Harry nodded. "So, let's go there."

"I'm not sure where the Valley of Magicians is," Asim admitted.

"Oh," Harry glanced down at the parchment and then looked around. "Follow me, every thing's changed in the last few thousand years but I think I can find it."

Harry led the group through several small draws and under a rock arch, "the tomb you're looking for should be the third one on the left." Harry pointed.

"What is this place?" Asim looked around in wonder at the seemingly new tombs.

"The Valley of the Magicians," Harry replied with a yawn. "Should be about three hundred tombs here, I'll draw up a map if you want."

"That would be very helpful," Asim replied in shock. "What is this inscription? It does not appear to be regular hieroglyphs."

"Let me look," Harry squinted and after a moment removed his glasses. "Oh, I'm not surprised that you can't read that."

"Why not?"

"Because there haven't been many people in history that could read that," Harry replaced his glasses. "I'll translate it if you like, it's not that important though just talks about how great the guy in the ground is."

"I see," Asim's eyes couldn't have gotten wider. "How did you . . ."

The sound of falling rocks in the distance and a large rising cloud of dust interrupted whatever the man was going to say next.

"Looks like a rock slide," Harry squinted at the dust. "You'd better send some men to check it out, someone might be hurt and it would be a crime not to check."

"Yes of course, I'll head the party myself." Asim volunteered, eager to get away.

|||||||

Five minutes earlier and three miles away:

"Have you found anything yet?" Umbridge demanded, "I can't keep up these cooling charms forever."

"I think we're on his trail," Shacklebolt fought the urge to frown. "It shouldn't be too far ahead."

"Well hurry up," the toad like woman demanded. "I don't want to be in this sun any longer than I have to."

"Why don't I go talk with the lead scout?" Shacklebolt suggested, "then I'll be able to give you a better report."

The toad like woman grunted her assent and continued to glare at the Aurors assigned to her protection detail.

Kingsley's long legs took him ahead of the small procession and was soon beside his point man, or in this case point girl.

"Why can't I use cooling charms?" Tonks asked in a fair impression of Umbridge's voice, "and why wasn't I smart enough to resign when I had the chance."

"You can't use cooling charms because we need to conserve our magical strength in case there's a fight," Shacklebolt answered with a forced grin. "And you didn't resign because you're as dumb as a post."

"Hey," Tonks frowned. "I'll have you know . . ."

A large rock hitting the back of her head halted the Auror in mid sentence and she crumbled to the ground.

"Tonks?" Kingsley rushed over and attempted to shield his subordinate from further harm. Grunting he felt several more rocks impact, Shacklebolt collapsed and fought hard to remain conscious.

The rock shower lasted for a fraction of a second and Kingsley had to wipe the blood from his eyes to get a good look around. Horrible screams broke the silence and it took the Auror a moment to find their source.

Umbridge lay pinned under two massive rocks, the toad like woman screamed in pain and fear as she watched the blood leak from the lower half of her body.

After taking a moment to check to make sure that Tonks was still alive and in no danger, Shacklebolt rushed over to check the large woman and to see if he could render any assistance.

Just as he prepared to cast his best blood clotting charm, Umbridge gave a sort of gasp and sagged to the ground. Hogwarts's first High Inquisitor was dead.

IIIIIIII

"How did your expedition go Asim?"

"Successful beyond our wildest dreams," Asim replied proudly. "Black discovered a hidden chamber in the great pyramid, he discovered several unknown tombs on the way to the site, and he discovered an entire valley filled with the tombs of the ancient magicians."

"So it was a good idea to ask for Black's help," a woman in shadow nodded. "Tell me what you think of the man, leave nothing out."

"He scares me," Asim admitted. "He made an offhanded comment about seeking redemption for destroying several civilizations in the past. He casually read a dead language and he offered to translate an unknown language. He mentioned the fact that things had changed in the last few thousand years and that he might have a bit of difficulty remembering where the Valley of Magicians might be and the casual way he located tombs leads me to believe that he wasn't

so much discovering them as remembering where they were located."

"I see," the woman nodded.

"I don't think you do," Asim continued. "A preliminary report says that several of the wizards in the valley were killed by 'the dark one' and I believe . . . I believe that 'the dark one' is the man that took me to visit all these tombs . . . we cannot afford to antagonize this man."

"And we won't," the woman promised. "We shall do everything we can to remain in his good graces."

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"Mr. Black," a group of several Egyptian Law Enforcement Officers approached with a smile. "We checked that land slide and you were right to be concerned, we found several people trapped under the rocks."

"Was anyone hurt?"

"Most had only minor injuries," the man smiled. "But there was one death, documents on the woman's body state that they were a group of British Aurors that was sent to make your arrest."

"I see," Harry frowned. "Do you know why?"

"Something to do with the death of a prominent pure blood in Switzerland," the man shrugged. "But it's none of our concern. We were hoping that you could look through these photos and identify them to confirm that they were British Aurors and not imposters . . . the dead woman is at the bottom."

"Let's see," Harry began going through the photos. "This one is Auror Kingsley Shacklebolt, a good man and a talented Auror. This one is named Tonks, another good Auror. She's a bit touchy about her first name so just call her Tonks. Can't remember this one's name, or this one." Harry reached the final photo and couldn't help but smile, "and her name is Delores Jane Umbridge. I'm not too fond of her and I can't say that I'm sorry she died in this terrible accident."

"What would you like us to do about the surviving Aurors?" The Egyptians eyed each other.

"Tell them that I'd appreciate it if they didn't try to arrest me," Harry smiled. "Now I realise that they're just doing their jobs but . . ."

"We understand sir," the Egyptians couldn't believe how good Black was.

"Would you mind making sure that they get the best medical attention possible." Harry asked, his concern evident. "And charge it to me, I understand that they were just following the orders of an idiot politician and I want to make sure that they're taken care of."

"Yes sir," the men nodded. "We'll ensure that they get the best of care."

IIIIIIII

"How are you Auror Shacklebolt?" A small woman walked in and sat next to the Auror's bed, "I'm from the office of foreign affairs."

"And you want to know what my team was doing in your country without sanction?" Kingsley closed his eyes.

"No," the woman gave a musical laugh. "We already know all that, the documents in Ms. Umbridge's pockets told us all we needed to know about your mission."

"So what's going to happen to my team?" Kingsley felt sick to his stomach, "if it helps I'm willing to testify that they had no knowledge that they were going to invade a sovereign nation's borders."

"No need to do that," the woman smiled. "After consulting with Mr. Black, we've managed to decide how we're going to deal with the situation."

"Yes?" Kingsley braced himself for the worst.

"We're going to let you return to England with a warning and we're going to lodge a formal protest with the British government."

"That's all?" Shacklebolt's eyes shot open in astonishment.

"That's all," the woman agreed. "And Mr. Black had a message for you."

"What did he want to tell us?"

"He said that you were good Aurors, that you and Ms. Tonks specifically were good Aurors and that he understood that you were just doing your job. He said that he'd rather you not try to arrest him in the future, that it's annoying. He insisted that you get the best medical care possible and he also insisted that he pay for it." The woman's expression turned cold, "he also said that he wasn't too fond of Ms. Umbridge. He added that he wouldn't feel any sorrow at the fact that she died in a terrible accident."

"I see," Kingsley paled. "He liked us and he 'wasn't too fond' of Umbridge, we escaped from a freak accident without any injuries and she died in horrible agony . . ."

"I see you understand," the woman patted him on the arm. "Feel free to come back to Egypt any time you like, feel free to hunt Mr. Black any time you like . . . but if I were you, I wouldn't expect him to be so understanding in the future."

"I see," Kingsley nodded. "Anything else you'd like to add?"

"That will do it," the woman stood up. "The healers tell me that you and your team can leave at any time, we have an international portkey waiting for you for when you wish to advantage of it."

"Thank you," Shacklebolt allowed himself to relax.

"Don't thank me," the woman smiled. "If it were up to me, you'd be in a cell right now and your team would be spilling everything they know under truth serum . . . but of course, I'm not the one you went after."

IIIIIIIIII

"From your quick return," Fudge didn't bother to look up as Shacklebolt entered the room to make his report. "And the lack of my assistant, I'd say that your mission was a failure."

"Mr. Black wanted me to tell you that he might get annoyed if you keep trying to arrest him," Shacklebolt reported to the Minister. "And I would recommend that you honor his request. If you chose to ignore it . . . if you chose to ignore it then I doubt that you will find any Auror willing to follow your order to arrest him."

"What's the worst thing he could do?" Fudge blustered.

"Well . . . he could kill you," Kingsley suggested. "And I'm told that he gets . . . creative if you anger him."

"I see," reality hit Fudge like a lead pipe. "Rescind the order to arrest Mr. Black, list him as a Special advisor to the Department of Law Enforcement with all the powers and privileges that position entails, and find a way to give him my assurance that it was all a misunderstanding."

"Good idea," Shacklebolt nodded. "I'll get right on it."

"And send a full report to Madame Bones," self preservation was one of the few things that Fudge excelled at. "With the order that she provide any assistance that Mr. Black requires that will not impede the war effort."

Fudge waited until the Auror left the room before reaching into his desk to pull out the bottle he kept for occasions like this, trembling hands pored a glass and Fudge contemplated his recent brush with death.

IIIIIIII

Shacklebolt left the Minister's office and made his way back to the Department of Law Enforcement. After writing up a quick report on the days events for his superior, he went in search of his partner.

"What's the verdict?" Tonks asked nervously.

"I managed to convince the Minister that further pursuit of Mr. Black would be a bad idea." Kingsley replied. "He's also given the official ok to tell Bones what happened."

"Are we going to do that now?" Tonks was still a bit stiff from her injuries.

"I've already forwarded it to Bones," Shacklebolt took a deep breath. "I think we should knock off early and go get a drink."

"Sounds good," Tonks agreed. "But I'm not supposed to mix alcohol with the potions they gave me."

"Then you can have juice," Kingsley smiled. "Come on."

"Right," Tonks nodded.

The two Aurors left the Ministry building and made their way to a secure floo.

"You up for this?" Kingsley gave his partner a worried look, "I'm not sure about traveling with a head injury."

"So I'll throw up when I get there," Tonks shrugged. "I'll be fine."

"Ok," Kingsley threw in a handful of floo and motioned for his partner to go first. "Hags before beauty."

"Ladies first," Tonks corrected and called out her destination.

Taking one last glance around, Kingsley tossed in his own handful of floo and called out his destination.

"Now that the two of you have arrived," Dumbledore gave a grandfatherly smile. "We can get to business."

"We have some important information," Kingsley called out as he took his seat.

"You won't believe what the Minister did," Tonks chipped in.

"Enlighten us then," Snape sneered.

"The Minister sent us to arrest Mr. Black," Shacklebolt smiled. "Under the leadership of his Special Assistant."

"I take it that your mission was not a success?" Dumbledore asked mildly.

"Black dropped a rock slide on us," Tonks gave a weak smile. "Most of the injuries were nothing that couldn't be healed by a few hours with a healer."

"I see," Dumbledore nodded. "Were there any fatalities?"

"One," Kingsley nodded. "Delores Umbridge was crushed under a rock and bled to death before I could put a clotting charm on her."

"I see," Dumbledore nodded. "You're sure that this was the work of Mr. Black and not an accident?"

"The Egyptians gave me a message from Mr. Black," Shacklebolt licked his lips. "He said that he understood that we were just doing our jobs and he said that Tonks and I were very good Aurors, he said that if we kept trying to arrest him that he would get annoyed. He also said that he didn't like Umbridge and that he wasn't saddened by her death in such a terrible accident."

"No one got seriously hurt except for Umbridge?" Moody asked, "what else can you tell me about what happened."

"I talked to one of the men that dug us out," Kingsley replied. "He told me that Mr. Black was standing next to him when the rock slide occurred. He added that the only reason they bothered to check is because Mr. Black mentioned that there might have been someone caught up in the rock slide and how it would be terrible if nobody checked."

"Didn't want you dead then," Moody nodded. "Wanted Umbridge dead and she died, wanted you alive and went so far as to send men to rescue you."

"You don't believe that there's any chance it could have been an accident?" Dumbledore asked quietly.

"The chances of a team of Aurors after the man to get caught in a freak accident are fairly low," Moody nodded. "For the only fatality to be a Ministry flunky that Mr. Black doesn't like makes the chances even lower, for all the injuries on the Aurors that Mr. Black does like to be minor lowers the odds even more. And for Mr. Black to send a group of men to dig out the team makes the odds too low to consider."

"Mr. Black also instructed the Egyptian government to give us the best of care," Kingsley added. "He also insisted on paying for it."

"They told me that the only reason we were going home instead of a small cell was because Mr. Black asked them to let us go," Tonks swallowed. "And one of the Nurses told me that they believed that Mr. Black was an ex dark lord."

"Really?" Dumbledore leaned forward in interest.

"She said that it was just a rumor," Tonks bit her lower lip. "But that they believed that Mr. Black destroyed several civilizations and that the fact that he spent his time foiling dark lords was either a hobby or his idea of redemption."

"One of the Orderlies told me that Mr. Black showed them several previously unknown tombs, and a valley of lost magical knowledge." Kingsley added, "he also mentioned that several of the tombs reported that their owners fell to 'the dark one' and it was strongly suggested that the dark one was Mr. Black."

"I see," Dumbledore paused to take in the information. "Learn all you can about this man but do not antagonize him."

"So no wonder he has so much contempt for Voldemort," Moody gave a rasping laugh. "Black destroyed entire civilizations and Volde has trouble subjugating a small subgroup in a single country."

IIIIIIII

"Could I ask you something?" Harry looked down at his new friend.

"What would you like to know?" The Architect nodded.

"When we were at the great pyramid, I noticed something odd."

"Yes?"

"I'd always thought that it would be crowded with visitors," Harry replied. "But when we were there it was deserted."

"Ah," the Goblin nodded. "That's because I was using Tourist Repellent TM, it allows me to work in peace."

"Oh," Harry nodded. "Well I guess that explains that."

"And no more thought need be wasted on the matter," the Architect nodded in agreement.

IIIIIIIIII

"Master," random death eater number three approached his master. "I have news for you."

"What is it?" The Dark Lord leaned back in his chair.

"The group in Egypt reports that they have information that suggests that Mr. Black was the most feared Dark Lord in history," the death eater groveled. "They say that entire civilizations crumbled before his might."

"What?" Voldemort grabbed his wand, "how dare you say that he could have been more terrible than I am . . . CRUCIO."

AN: Here it is, the latest chapter. For those that didn't see the reference to Mr. Black destroying civilizations, it's when he's in the great pyramid and he mentions that he must have done something horrible in a past life, like destroy a couple of civilizations.

Boy did you pick the Wrong Guy to Kidnap

Harry and his group returned to the Zeppelin to find a worried Doctor clutching a piece of Parchment.

"What's wrong?" Harry asked in concern.

"They've kidnapped the Professor," the Doctor handed over the parchment. "They're demanding that you give yourself up."

"How did they manage to send the ransom note?" Harry blinked.

"There's another not explaining that," the Doctor replied. "Here."

"The Professor writes that he sent it back with his Zippo . . . and then sent this second note explaining how the first note got here along with an explanation on how this second not arrived." Henchgirl glanced through the note. "Though he doesn't say why he didn't just use the Zippo to port back."

"He was probably out of range or something," Harry shrugged. "What's the other note say?"

"Says that they'll start cutting off fingers if you don't respond soon," Henchgirl looked over the parchment. "Is it difficult to reattach fingers?"

"Very," the Doctor nodded. "If they send us a finger, it might be too late to put it back on by the time we find him."

"Can you attach a fresh finger if I was to find another one?" Harry asked quietly.

"Yes," the Doctor nodded. "But I don't think you'll have an easy time finding any fresh fingers."

"If we find the people who took him," Harry's smile turned cold. "I'll have all the body parts you'll ever need."

"I . . ." the Doctor nodded.

"I'll move the Zeppelin to the Professor's location," Henchgirl replied. "He shouldn't be too hard to find."

"I'm going to do a bit of reading," Harry called out. "Tell me when we're close, I want to be sure we have a good entrance."

"I'll get a field hospital set up," the Doctor volunteered.

"I'll . . . get some sleep," the Architect nodded to himself. "Wake me if there are any interesting ruins or something."

IIIIIIII

"No one's going to save any of you," the Bandit smirked at his captives. "And pretty soon I'm gonna start sending parts of you back to your families and . . ."

"Oh shut up," the Professor glared. "It's bad enough being in such an uncomfortable cage, must you taint the air with your incessant simpering?"

"Wha . . ." The bandit stared in shock, he'd never had that response.

"And another thing," the Professor started working up steam. "I think I'm an important captive, I should have my own cage . . . why should I have to share a cage with other people, granted they've been good company but still I find it rather insulting that you didn't go to the effort of giving me my own cage or even chaining me to the bars . . . that . . . that lack of respect for my level of threat will not go forgotten."

"O . . . huh?" The bandit wandered off in confusion, tormenting the captives was no fun if they were going to complain about how mild the treatment had been.

"You . . . you stood up to him?" One of the captives stared at the Professor in shock, "I've never seen anybody do that."

"The nerve of that man," the Professor folded his arms. "You'd think that I was harmless, I can't believe how insulting that is."

"Um . . . who are you?" One of the other captives asked with a look of wonder.

"Me?" The Professor smiled, "I'm no one of consequence."

"The Dread Pirate Roberts?" The captive smiled, "Yay three cheers for--"

"I'm not the Dread Pirate Roberts," the Professor frowned. "I'm--"

"Mr. Black?" The captives all perked up, with Mr. Black around they'd soon be out.

"Nope," the Professor shook his head. "He usually adds that he's just a guy on vacation . . . I'm the Professor."

"Who?" The captives sagged.

"The Professor, I work for Mr. Black . . ." the Professor looked around at the blank faces, "surely you've heard of me?"

"Wait . . ." one of the captives gave a slow nod, "he's the guy that works with Henggirl."

"You know Henggirl?" The captives perked up, "what's she like."

"That's not important," the Professor sulked. "What's important is that Mr. Black will be here soon and I think that he'll be annoyed, so if you'll give me that hair pin, that bubble gum, those bits of wood, and that green rock. I'll find a way to get the cage open so Mr. Black doesn't have to wait around while the others overcome the wards."

IIIIIIII

"We're close," Henggirl called out.

"Excellent," Harry grinned. "I thought that I'd better provide a better entrance than fog."

"What are you gonna do?" Henggirl asked with a frown.

"Fog is uncommon in the desert," Harry explained as he began casting the spells. "Sand storms on the other hand."

"The book has a section on sand storms?" Henchgirl's brows shot up, "I must have missed it."

"No," Harry shook his head. "But it does have a section on wind."

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"Wind's picking up," Bandit one said to Bandit two.

"Yep," Bandit two nodded. "Looks like there might be a storm."

"And you know what happens in storms," Bandit one grinned. "Things go missing."

"The big crate that the boss has been keeping everyone away from?" Bandit two suggested.

"Gotta be worth a lot," Bandit one agreed. "Why don't we open it up and check."

"Be a shame if someone beat us to it," Bandit two grabbed his crowbar.

The two idiots pried open the crate and found a large metal box inside.

"How do you suppose we open this?" Bandit one frowned.

"The key is hanging off it," Bandit two smirked. "Lucky for us."

"Well let's open it then," Bandit one grabbed the key and opened the lock. "Just a statue."

"Of what?" Bandit two peered into the darkness.

"Looks like a sleeping Nundu," Bandit one gave his opinion.

It was then, that the 'statue's' eyes shot open.

"Um . . . I don't think that's a statue," Bandit two gave his opinion. It was the last thing he'd ever do.

The Nundu raged through the camp killing everyone that crossed its path, within minutes nearly every bandit in camp had been ripped to bloody shreds.

"What's going on out there?" Wormtail growled.

"Sounds like Mr. Black might be here," one of the younger death eaters opinioned. "Why don't you go check?"

"Why don't you?" Wormtail replied.

"Because I already have my wand out rat," the young death eater smirked.

"Fine," Wormtail glared and stepped out of the tent. Everything seemed oddly calm and Wormtail was about to turn around and step back into the tent he shared with the other death eaters when he felt a hot breath on the back of his neck.

Turning to look, Wormtail began screaming when his mind registered what he saw. Wormtail screamed as the large cat like creature clamped down on his arm. Turning into a rat, the pathetic man managed to escape and ran towards the tent.

"What'd you find?" The death eaters looked up as their comrade staggered into the tent and returned to human form.

"Where's the portkey?" Peter demanded, "Where's The Bloody Portkey?"

"I got it right here around my neck," one of the death eaters pulled it out. "So don't worry."

Peter lunged at the man and grabbed it, "activate it."

"What?"

"Activate the damn thing now," Peter looked over his shoulder and nearly passed out in fright when he saw the Nundu stick it's head in the tent.

"Merlin," the snide death eater from before paled. "It can't be . . ."

The death eater managed to activate the portkey just as the terrible beast opened its mouth, of the entire team of death eaters . . . they would be the only survivors.

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"Professor," Harry found the cage containing his friend. "Stand back while I get this open."

"No need," the Professor held up a strange looking device. "If you could stand to one side."

"Sure," Harry stepped aside and watched in shock as the cage collapsed into its component parts. "Do you want to find your wand now?"

"Again no need," the Professor shrugged. "I left it on the Zeppelin, is there anything you'd like to do here?"

"No," Harry shook his head. "Everyone gather around, we've got to get away from here as soon as possible."

"Whys that?" The Professor blinked.

"Someone let a Nundu loose in the camp and its been rampaging and killing everyone," Harry replied.

"What an amazing coincidence," one of the captives smirked. "You wouldn't happen to be Mr. Black would you?"

"I am," Harry nodded. "Why?"

"No reason," the man looked like he was barley holding back the laughter. "Just wondering."

The rest of the group of former captives got a look of dawning realization and began snickering and concealing grins.

"Everyone touching the portkey?" Harry took one last look around, "port me up."

"You found him," Henchgirl girl greeted the arrivals. "Yay."

"And he was with a bunch of other prisoners," Harry nodded. "So it might be a good idea to send them to the Doctor . . . it also might be a good idea to notify the authorities about the rampaging Nundu that I saw in the camp."

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"Sir," one of the former captives walked into the Egyptian Department of Magical Law Enforcement. "I have information that you have to hear."

"Khafra?" The Head of Magical Law Enforcement looked at the man in shock, "you're alive."

"Mr. Black rescued me from the bandits," Khafra gave a weak smile. "And I believe that he killed every bandit there."

"My god, he told us that he destroyed the camp but he did not say that he did it alone." the older man shook his head in wonder. "How did he do it?"

"One of two ways," Khafra smiled. "Either he set a Nundu loose in the camp or . . ."

"Or?"

"Or he's a Nundu Animagus," Khafra replied.

"He told us that there was a Nundu on the loose but we couldn't find any sign of the creature when we looked," the old man smiled. "Though it would make sense for the most dangerous man in the world to take the form of the most dangerous creature in the world don't you think?"

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Mr. Black – Ex-Dark Lord or the Incarnation of Death and Destruction

By Ms. Information

It has come to our attention that Mr. Black has admitted to being the cause of the destruction of several civilizations and this has led some to label him as an Ex-Dark Lord. We at the Quibbler would like to propose an alternate explanation. For starters, there can be no creation without destruction and Mr. Black has shown time and time again that he is quite good at destroying things . . .

Mr. Black - He can't be human.

By Laetus Lovegood

I recently had the privilege of visiting a visiting a small town in Bulgaria where I came upon a statue dedicated to Mr. Black who is a local folk hero that many people think is a patron of fertility . . .

. . . a whole conclave of Veela, now I'm sure most men have dreamed about doing it but can you imagine what it would take to actually . . .

. . . and all the Veela were worn out, could barley move . . .

. . . several Veela conclaves have posted rewards for the location of Mr. Black, said one of the Veela 'I talked to my cousins and they told me . . . all about him, they said that . . .

. . . the question remains, how do we convince Mr. Black to teach us his secretes . . .

. . . hopefully coming soon from Lovegood press 'What I did to an entire conclave of Veela and How I did it' by Mr. Black.

I think I can find out Father, "Luna looked up from her father's latest article."

"Find out what kumquat?" The odd man looked down at his child.

"What Mr. Black did to all those Veela and more importantly how," Luna replied. "How's this sound . . . I'm Luna Lovegood, Lovegood by name Love very Good by reputation."

"Go to your room," Laetus replied calmly. "And don't come out until after I have a chance to perform all those chastity rituals."

"I'm sure I could get him to join me there," Luna replied as she skipped up the stairs.

"The house has wards," her father replied.

"I'm sure he could get through those," Luna smirked.

"Well then go to my room while I impersonate you with Polyjuice," Laetus nodded. It was a fool proof plan.

"No," Luna stuck out her tongue. "You go to your room while I do what ever I want."

"Fine!"

"Fine!"

AN: Harry has a few more places to visit, brief stop in India or Bhutan . . . maybe both. Japan, Australia, and then America before heading back to Europe for the final few chapters.

Off we go to India

Harry spent the morning going over the various magical texts that had been recovered from his finds. Most of them were nothing spectacular, but one did catch his eye. It was a journal from one of the tombs that dated to the late Roman period. The journal's first pages labeled it as being a copy of a copy of an older document.

"Bit of a whiny bastard," Harry glanced through the first through pages. "Full of himself too."

About half way through the book, he came across something that caught his eye. Putting down the book, Harry made his way to the bridge to meet up with Henggirl and the Professor.

"Hey Professor," Harry walked into the room and looked around. "Who are all these people?"

"You of course know Director Asim," the Professor smiled. "This is mister Jones, he's a representative from Gringotts bank."

"Nice to meet you," Harry nodded to the man. "Is there some reason you chose to visit?"

"We were hoping that you would be willing to subcontract the treasure recovery," Jones smiled. "That would allow you to move on and the treasure to be recovered much quicker."

"Oh," Harry nodded. "How much do you want?"

"We were thinking that half of your share would be a fair price," Jones suggested.

"Oh," Harry nodded. "No."

"What?" Jones had never been in a negotiation like this.

"No," Harry smiled. "But thanks for the offer."

"What'd you come in here for?" Henggirl asked with a smile.

"Oh," Harry nodded. "I almost forgot, I just wanted to tell you that I wanted to make a quick stop in Atlantis when we got around to crossing the Atlantic ocean."

"What?" Screamed nearly every person in the room.

"Just that I wanted to make a quick stop in Atlantis," Harry replied. "There's something I'd like to pick up."

"You know where Atlantis is?" Jones asked incredulously, "people have been searching for the lost city's resting place for years?"

"Yep," Harry nodded. "They wouldn't have found it, it's under a charm that prevents you from finding it unless you know the location and the sinking didn't harm the enchantments."

"You mentioned that you wanted to pick something up?" Asim asked, wanting to get the conversation back on track.

"Yeah," Harry nodded. "Some guy named Myrddin hid a book that he said contained great power just before he got kicked out and I'd like to see what's in it."

"Myrddin?" Asim asked in shock, "kicked out?"

"Yeah," Harry nodded. "He said that they kicked him out because they were jealous of his great power, and the official reason was because he was too magically weak, but I think it was because he was a whiny bastard and they just got sick of him."

"What else can you tell us about Myrddin?" Jones demanded.

"Well," Harry paused to think for a moment. "He had bad acne, red hair, and his voice didn't change until he was fifteen." Harry shook his head, god was that diary tedious. "Can't tell you anything about what he was like after his seventeenth birthday though."

"Oh," the men shared a glance.

"Well," Harry yawned. "I'm going to go take a nap."

The Professor and Henchgirl watched in amusement as the men sat frozen in shock.

"Mummy's Brew?" Asim pulled a flask out of his pocket and offered it to Jones.

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"I have a very important report to make," Asim barged into a meeting between his superiors. "I have vital information that you must hear."

"What is it Asim?" One of them asked.

"This had better be important," another added.

"Mr. Black knows the location of Atlantis," Asim shouted. "And he's planning on visiting it to recover something left behind by Merlin himself."

"WHAT?" The collected group's jaws dropped in shock.

"What did he say?" One of the members managed to recover from their shock.

"He said that the lost city was covered by a ward that would only let those possessing the password to cross." Asim answered quickly, "he added that he didn't think much of Merlin."

"Why not?"

"He said that Merlin was a whiny kid with acne," Asim gulped. "And that his voice didn't change until late in life, he said that he couldn't tell us much about Merlin's life after the age of seventeen."

"Oh," they shared glances.

"Just goes to show how old he really is," one of the older men spoke up. "Asim, I've known you all your life but do you know what I think of when I think of you?"

"No"

"I think of the snot nosed kid who threw a rock through my sitting room window," the old man replied. "Knobby knees and runny nose, not of the man you are now."

IIIIIIII

"Mr. Black," the Professor knocked on Harry's door. "Remember that Nundu you saw in the camp?"

"Yeah," Harry nodded. "Why?"

"Well," the Professor smiled. "Do you also remember that device I made to get myself out of that cage?"

"Why do I have a feeling that I'm not going to like the way this conversation is headed?" Harry sighed, "what happened?"

"It's funny you should ask that," the Professor giggled. "Because that invention of mine just happened to have transported the Nundu to one of the unused sections of the Zeppelin."

"WHAT?" Harry's eyes widened in alarm.

"Don't worry," the Professor waved off the concerns. "It's in a section of space outside of normal space, one of my experiments went a little wrong and . . . well I guess it doesn't matter. The important thing is that you figure out what to do with the Nundu."

"Why me?" Harry blinked, "it's your Nundu."

"Well," the Professor took a moment to think about it. "No it's your Nundu, I had it registered as your pet."

"When did you do that?" Harry smirked.

"Just now," the Professor nodded. "When I said it was your pet."

"So you didn't file any paperwork with any government or anything?" Harry asked sarcastically, "you just decided that it was mine?"

"That's it exactly," the Professor nodded.

"Why can't I just say it's your Nundu?" Harry tried to twist his mind around his friend's logic.

"Because it already belongs to you," the Professor nodded. "And switching owners would hurt its feelings so you can't give it to me."

"Oh," Harry sighed. "I see, do we have a way to feed it?"

"I've taken care of it," the Professor nodded. "But Henghirl and I were talking and we think that you should take a more active role in its care and feeding."

"By Henghirl and I you mean just you right?" Harry nodded, "and I'm guessing that by more active role you mean all of it don't you?"

"Well . . . yes," the Professor admitted with a frown.

"Nice try," Harry smirked. "But no."

"Fine," the Professor sulked.

"Go talk to the Doctor," Harry suggested. "And Henghirl, I'm sure that the Doctor might be able to use the fact that it breathes out Diseases and who knows Nundu . . . droppings might be valuable potions ingredients."

"And getting Henghirl to check if Nundu droppings are potions ingredients would be a perfect way to trick her into cleaning up after it," the Professor nodded. "Brilliant."

"That wasn't . . . so where do you think we should go next?" Harry figured that it would be best if he avoided that particular conversation.

"I don't have any preferences," the Professor shrugged. "Where would you like to go?"

"India sounds nice," Harry shrugged. "And I've done a bit of reading on Bhutan, sounds like an interesting place to visit."

"Then we shall go to India," the Professor nodded. "There are a few things that Henghirl and I wanted to look at in India."

"What do you two want to look at in India?" Harry glanced up at the Professor's and noticed the odd look in the other man's eye, "Never Mind . . . there are some things that I'd prefer not to know."

"Very well," the Professor nodded. "I shall set a course."

"I guess I'll read through some of these texts we got," Harry shrugged. "Interesting stuff, I've learned more about wards and curses in the last few hours than I have in the past few years."

"Mr. Black?" The Doctor knocked on the door, "is this a good time?"

"Sure," Harry nodded. "What do you need."

"I'll just be going then," the Professor took his leave.

"I was hoping to get that blood sample," the Doctor replied. "And I wanted to cast a few diagnostic charms."

"Ok," Harry nodded. "Go ahead."

The Doctor pulled out a small syringe and filled it with Harry's blood.

"Is that going to be safe?" Harry winced. "My blood is supposed to be poisonous."

"It should be," the Doctor nodded. "I cast every protection charm I could find on it and then had the Professor and Henghirl add their charms . . . and the Architect thought it looked fun so he used a bit of goblin magic, and then . . ."

"I get it," Harry nodded. "Need anything else?"

"I'll tell you after I cast the diagnostic charms," the Doctor replied. "Looks like you have a piece of Basilisk fang embedded in one of your bones."

"I got bit by one a few years ago," Harry nodded. "And I was lucky enough to have a phoenix around to cry in the wound."

"That would explain what I'm seeing," the Doctor nodded. "I'd also like a saliva sample, I want to see if you can turn people into werewolves."

"Alright," Harry opened his mouth to allow access.

"One second . . . ok, you can close now."

"Thanks," Harry nodded. "Did you find anything else?"

"Lot's of things," the Doctor nodded. "If you're asking, did I understand most of it then the answer is no. I'll get back to you on that."

"Ask the Professor to tell you about the Nundu," Harry scratched the back of his head. "I was thinking that you might have a use for it's breath."

"I might," the Doctor nodded. "One would reason that if it has the diseases then it also might have the cure for them, thank you."

"No problem," Harry smiled.

Harry passed the time on the trip to India by going over the immense amount of material that had been recovered from the the tombs and by the time they arrived, he figured that he must have doubled his knowledge of offensive wards.

"We have arrived my friend," the Professor knocked on Harry's door. "And I have some devices that I think might interest you."

"Oh?" Harry got up, 'what kind of devices?"

"This," the Professor held up a small roll of leather. "Is a set of lock picks. It should be able to open virtually any lock int the world."

"What about magic locks?" Harry examined the item.

"I included a small device that should trick most magical locks into believing that you have the correct pass code," the Professor replied proudly. "It's all in this set of instructions."

"Thanks," Harry nodded. "What else?"

"This belt," the Professor handed over a dragon hide belt. "Has several hidden compartments containing an assortment of potions . . . Henchgirl and the Doctor's idea."

"Thanks," Harry nodded. "It's a great idea."

"Another thing that the doctor asked me to develop is this little thing," the Professor pulled out a small metal plate. "It goes on your arm over the chip of Basilisk fang. The way this works is that it surrounds the chip with a magical field and collects the poison that's being produced . . . a few days and your blood won't be so deadly."

"Why does it collect the poison?" Harry affixed the item onto his arm, "and is there a way to turn it off?"

"Henchgirl and the Doctor tell me that Basilisk Poison is much too useful to be floating around in your blood," the Professor explained. "So they want it collected. To turn off the effect just will it off."

"Will it off?"

"Decide you want it to stop working?" The Professor explained. "Two more items."

"Where are they?" Harry smiled.

"There in my lab," the Professor explained. "Come get them when you finish packing."

"Ok," Harry shrugged.

Harry spent the next few minutes packing and then shouldered his pack and went to the Professor's lab.

"What have you got for me Professor?" Harry strolled into the lab with a look of anticipation.

"I have two very important items that I would like you to try out," the Professor was bouncing with anticipation. "'Here's the first one . . . what do you think?"

"I think it looks like a camera," Harry lifted the device to take a closer look, "what does it do?"

"It is a disguised audio recording device," the Professor replied happily, "and here's the other device."

"It looks like a tape recorder," Harry replied in a flat voice, "but I would guess that it's a camera of some sort, isn't it?"

"Yes you're right, it's a sophisticated imagery device." The Professor agreed

AN: A Nundu is the most dangerous thing in the wizarding world, it's a big cat and there's a good description of it in the harry potter lexicon. Myrddin is Merlin, the diary Harry found was from when Merlin was an annoying teenager and not the powerful mage he would later become. Even if you told him that the diary belonged to Merlin he likely wouldn't believe you, the diary is all about some dumb whiny snot nosed kid and not a great mage.

The Universe's Spittoon

"Hello?" Amelia Bones knocked on the door of one of the wizarding world's more . . . eccentric families. "Is there anybody here?"

"You," Laetus snarled as he opened the door. "My office now."

"What?" Amelia had been warned, oh why didn't she believe them.

"SIT," Laetus's face reddened. "Do you know how deep the department is because of you?"

"Um . . . no?"

"NO?" Laetus tossed a large file on the desk, "in the past month you've destroyed five cars and cost the city over fifty million dollars."

"Oh," Amelia blinked.

"Yes Oh," Laetus sighed. "The Mayor is on the Chief's ass and the Chief is on my ass . . . I would have had you gone a long time ago if it weren't for the fact that you're such a good cop."

"Thanks?" She blinked, "can I talk with you about . . ."

"The big Heroin bust," Laetus nodded. "Good job . . . just leave one of them alive next time, damn reporters are saying all kinds of things about you."

"Reporters?"

"Pox on all of them," Laetus nodded. "You won't find a more useless or dishonest profession. Show me a reporter and I'll show you someone that's too dumb and dishonest to make it in the real world."

"O . . . k," she blinked. "I was hoping to ask you . . ."

"Father," Luna stormed into the room and began glaring. "You took your medicine again didn't you?"

"I want your badge and gun Lovegood," Laetus scowled. "There's no place on the force for a loose cannon like you. What you did to the suspects in the Morales investigation . . . well, let's just say that you belong behind bars as much as any of them."

"Vomitum Maximus," Luna flicked her wand. "You can open your mouth without vomiting after you start acting normal again."

A three meter stream of vomit shot out of the man's mouth and out a conveniently nearby window.

Bones watched the byplay with a sense of shocked horror, "um . . . excuse me?"

"Hello Director Bones," Luna smiled. "I'm ever so sorry about the way Father's been acting."

"You mentioned something about medication?" Bones tried to make sense of the situation.

"Yes he gets like this sometimes," Luna nodded. "I've tried to lock the pills away but Father always manages to find them."

"I . . . see," the Director did not see.

"I don't know why he's started to think that we're police officers," Luna shrugged. "Everybody knows that we're secret agents posing as reporters that are posing as a man and his daughter."

"Yes . . . well . . . right. I was hoping to go through any information you might have on Mr. Black." The Director told herself that she could do this, she needed that information and these two seemed to have more of it than anyone else.

"Ok," Luna shrugged. "Do you want to set up a payment plan or pay in a lump sum?"

"What?"

"Secret agent work is tough and it doesn't pay well," Luna explained in a whisper.

"Oh . . . I . . . see," Amelia nodded. "How about I set up an account and we pay you for any information you get as you get it?"

"Ok," Luna focused on a point three meters to her left and fifteen meters behind the director's head.

"Well," Amelia smiled nervously. "About that information."

"Blarrg," Laetus opened his mouth.

"Ready to be a reporter again Father?" Luna smirked.

"Blarrg," Laetus nodded.

"Ok then," Luna undid the spell. "I hope you learned your blarrg."

"Don't forget that I'm the one that taught you that spell," Laetus's grin was entirely too smug. "And I can Blarrg."

"Blarrg," Luna glared. "But you don't know how to undo it and I do."

"Blarg"

"I feel sorry for whatever is below that window." Amelia muttered to herself.

"Now let's agree not to do this until the next projectile vomit appreciation day," Luna nodded as she undid the spell on her father again.

"Projectile Vomit Appreciation Day?" Amelia knew that she was going to regret asking about it.

"Yes," Laetus nodded. "I've noticed that several muggle institutes of higher learning hold festivals where several of the students projectile vomit . . . fascinating custom those muggles have."

"About that information?"

"Here you go," Luna tossed over a large file. "Pay us when you have a chance."

"So long as that chance is soon," Laetus added. "I've got a ravenous hell beast to feed and keep from the rest of humanity."

"Father," Luna blinked. "You say the nicest things about me."

"I'll just be going then," Bones took a quick glance through the file and was astounded at how thorough it was.

"Don't let the Snodfish get you," Luna replied happily.

"I . . . won't," Bones promised. As she made her way back to the office, a terrible thought forced its way into her brain. The file was much more detailed than was normally produced by reporters . . . what if the Lovegood girl hadn't been joking about being a secret agent? The two of them were the last people one would expect to be working for . . . someone like Mr. Black. Eyes widening in shock, Bones froze. On the one hand, she didn't have any evidence . . . and on the other, it explained so much.

Amelia walked outside and past a very disgruntled and vomit covered postman. Taking a step around the corner of the house to avoid the poor postman's notice she disappeared with a pop.

The first thing she did upon her return was to pull out a piece of parchment and list a few known facts about the Lovegood family. The first was that Luna was a friend of the Potter boy and had been with him on his trip to the Department of Mysteries. The second was that she came from a family that was well known for its eccentricity, so well known that very few wizards gave them a second thought or took them the least bit seriously . . . well until recently when Black appeared and proved that at least one of their crazy ideas was true . . . and she supposed about the rebirth of the dark lord. The fourth was Black, the family knew more about the mysterious man than anyone else that she knew of.

Amelia frowned, things were looking entirely too neat and the first thing she learned as a rookie investigator was that when things fit together so nicely that she had to be missing something, nothing was perfect. On the other hand, what kind of spies would announce that they were spies? One would think that they would do more to blend in, no one would think that . . . she froze. No one would suspect that a

person that was so flamboyant would be a spy, and the very idea that they announce their profession . . .

Amelia destroyed her well thought out list with a quick security charm. On the one hand nothing had been proven. And on the other . . . on the other she was going to get a subscription to that news paper of theirs.

IIIIIIII

"Only you Professor," Harry grinned. "Where are we at the moment?"

"We're over a tropical isle," the Professor smiled. "Henchgirl wanted to get some time on the beach."

"Could you arrange a portkey for me?" Harry yawned.

"Of course," the Professor nodded. "But if I may, I'd like to suggest something."

"What's that?" Harry blinked.

"It's late," the Professor pointed to a large clock. "Why not spend the remaining hours of daylight on the beach with us? That way you can get a fresh start in the morning."

"Ok," Harry nodded. "That sounds like a great idea."

"Wonderful," the Professor's grin widened. "I'll just go get Henchgirl."

"You do that," Harry nodded as he shifted his clothing to something more appropriate to the beach. "I'll meet you in the Port room."

Harry walked to the PortTrans room and was soon joined by an excited Professor and Henchgirl.

"I'm so happy you decided to join us," Henchgirl was a bit more bubbly then normal. "And to protect our skin from the sun and salt, I developed this new potion."

"Cool," Harry blinked. "Sounds great."

"Everyone drink up," Henggirl passed the bottles around. "I tried to make this batch taste like strawberries."

"Mine tastes like old socks," the Professor gagged.

"So it did," Henggirl took the bottle back. "I guess I must still be mad about the fact that you chose to get kidnapped and disrupted my vacation in Egypt."

"Silence Devil Woman," the Professor scowled.

"Devil Woman?" Henggirl's eyes flashed, "look who's talking you little Troll."

"Troll? TROLL?"

"I think it might be time to go to the beach now," Harry suggested.

"Ok," Henggirl nodded.

"Sounds good," the Professor agreed.

The three friends ported down and found themselves in a secluded cove.

"This is great," Harry looked around. "Absolutely fantastic."

"The whole stretch of land belongs to a wizarding family, so we won't be disturbed by anyone." The Professor smiled, "not even the family."

"Not even the family?" Harry had a bad feeling about the answer.

"They live in England," Henggirl yawned. "I know one of them and they said that we could spend as much time as we wanted here."

"Oh," Harry relaxed. He really needed to learn not to doubt his friends.

Henggirl spread out a blanket and the three of them flopped down onto it.

"This is the life," Harry closed his eyes. "I need to spend more time on the beach."

"I agree," the Professor nodded. "I think that . . . what's that in your hand?"

"This?" Harry opened his hand to show the rock that he was about to throw into the surf. "Just a rock."

"Could you let me examine it?" The Professor held out his hand.

"Sure," Harry shrugged. "Knock yourself out."

"What is it Professor?" Henchgirl leaned forward.

"It appears to have a high concentration of titanium," the Professor replied. "I've read that the beaches around here have rich titanium deposits but I've never seen anything like this."

"Pity we can't go into the ocean and find the source," Harry yawned. "I think I saw something about the stuff on the teli."

"We might be able to do something," the Professor smiled. "I'll have a talk with the Architect about it later . . . which brings us to a subject that Henchgirl and I have been wanting to discuss with you."

"Go ahead," Harry nodded. "I'm all ears."

"Henchgirl and I found the perfect Island for sale," the Professor smiled. "Barren, desolate, covered with numerous enchantments that repel nearly anything that has anything to do with people."

"Large enough to build a very large fortress, but small enough to be easy defensible." Henchgirl added, "it's also unclaimed land so we won't be bothered by any of those silly regulations preventing us from 'breaking the laws of nature' or 'finding out things that mankind was not meant to know.'"

"And the best part is that it's near the Antartica, so there will always be plenty of delicious penguins to eat." The Professor finished with an excited smile.

"Penguins?" Harry forced himself not to ask, "so why are you telling me all of this?"

"Well," the Professor began. "We were kind of hoping that you would be willing to buy it."

"Why not buy it yourself?" Harry asked, raising his eyebrow.

"We're not very good with money," Henchgirl explained with an embarrassed expression. "So we gave you controlling interest in the company and only allowed ourselves a small percentage of the profits to fund our research."

"Oh," Harry was stunned. "Sure, we could buy it if you want."

"Great," Henchgirl clapped. "I'll tell the Architect to start designing the place."

"What's the name of this company?" Harry couldn't believe how much his life had changed in the short time since he'd left school.

"Black Ink," the Professor replied proudly.

"Black Inc.?" Harry nodded.

"No," Henchgirl shook her head. "Black Ink . . . the Professor can't spell."

"Why not Professor industries, or Henchgirl Incorporated?" Harry was having a hard time following the train of logic. "Why name it after me?"

"Henchgirl Incorporated?" Henchgirl rubbed her chin, "can that be the name for our potions department?"

"Whatever you want," Harry shrugged.

"We named it after you for many reasons," the Professor smiled. "For one thing, none of this would have happened without your help."

"Ok," Harry stretched out. "Thank you."

"You are very welcome," the Professor nodded.

"Yeah," Henchgirl smiled.

"I had another idea for you two," Harry rested his head in his hands. "I understand that the Zippos are too small to send large things through but . . ."

"But?" The Professor couldn't wait to hear his friend's idea.

"But couldn't we use it with the PortTrans?" Harry smiled, "that way we can automatically portkey to anyone with a Zippo."

"Wouldn't work," the Professor deflated. "We might be able to work something out with manually created portkeys but we don't have the technology to carryout your idea at the moment . . . most we could do is send small non living objects."

"How small?" Harry smiled when he saw the Professor indicate the size of the item with his hands, "why don't we use it to deliver things? We'd be the fastest mail order business in the world, you item in thirty seconds or it's free."

"We might be able to do something like that," Henghgirl nodded. "I don't like the idea of giving out free items though."

"Then skip that part," Harry shrugged. "In fact, make them pay extra for our instant delivery."

"Ok," Henghgirl nodded. "Now let's go swimming."

"Last one in is a jar of some sort of disgusting matter," the Professor called out. "Possibly something that smells strongly of sulfur."

IIIIIIIIII

The next day, Harry's portkey delivered him to a busy street in a rather large town.

"There you are," a man stepped out of one of the many shops and grabbed Harry by the arm. "You were supposed to be here last night . . . do you know how hard it will be to get everything back on schedule?"

"Huh?" Harry stared at the obviously crazy man.

"Here are your portkeys," the man handed over a couple of small metal rings. "And here are your souvenirs, a bronze statue of Kali and an old Chakram that I'm sure has all sorts of mysterious powers . . . actually, I'd bet that both of them have some odd and unusual powers."

"What's going on?" Harry grabbed the items with his left hand to free his right for the duel that seemed to be on the way.

"You're late that's what's going on," the man glared. "You didn't do any of the things I saw you doing last night . . . what happened."

"I went to the beach," Harry let his wand drop into his hand. "And you still didn't answer my question."

"If you want answers then talk to that cousin of mine in England cause all of this is his fault," the man looked down at a small scrap of paper. "I contacted the tailor that you were supposed to go to, he and his wife will contact your friends . . . what am I forgetting?"

Harry's eyes widened as he felt the portkey pulling him to his next destination.

"Oh right," the man slapped himself on the forehead. "The death eaters . . . suppose that they won't be showing up. Not with how late he was anyway, some people just don't consider other people's feelings."

IIIIIIII

Harry dropped into a crouch with his wand out and quickly surveyed his surroundings. To his front was the Taj Mahal and to his back and sides were tourists. Shrugging his shoulders, Harry ignored the odd looks and pocketed his wand. Sighing in frustration, Harry walked up to the massive white building and added the shopkeeper to his people to beat severely list.

Harry spent several hours marveling at the massive building and was examining an interesting stretch of wall when he felt the tug of the other portkey.

"Forgot about the second one," Harry's wand appeared in his hand and his eyes scanned for danger.

"Are you my guest?" A small man looked up with a board expression.

"Maybe," Harry started to relax. "I'm not sure . . . where are we?"

"You're my guest," the small man nodded. "We're in a place where nations don't matter and names have no meaning."

"What's that supposed to . . . wow," Harry stared in awe at the massive mountains that dominated the skyline. "We . . . we must be in the Himalayas."

"Perhaps," the small man shrugged. "I'm not one to worry at such things. I'm your guide for this trip."

"I'm Mr. Black," Harry's mind had yet process all of the amazing view. "Nice to meet you."

"Come with me," the guide smiled. "It would be nice to get there before it gets dark."

"Get where?" Harry trailed behind the small man.

"To where we're going," the guide replied with a grin. "Where else would we be headed?"

"I guess that makes sense . . . sort of." Harry's eyes crossed, "how long will it take to get there?"

"As long as it takes," the guide shrugged.

"That shopkeeper is definitely moving up on that list," Harry muttered to himself.

The guide took Harry up an amazingly steep road and through a series of twists and turns.

"It is just around this bend," the guide called out as he rounded a large outcropping.

"What's just around the . . . wow," Harry stared in awe at the large city at the end of the road.

"I can go no further," the guide smiled. "You must take the last steps on your own."

"Why?"

"I owe someone money," the guide smiled. "And I'm afraid that they might be in there."

"Oh," Harry blinked. "I'll just be going then."

"I shall wait here for you," the guide smiled. "Have a pleasant visit."

The gates swung open on their own accord and several men in red and gold robes came out.

"Welcome young friend to Shangri La," they smiled in welcome. "May your visit be pleasant."

Harry walked through the gates and relaxed, the whole area seemed to exude a sense of peace and tranquility.

"I think . . . I think that I'm going to like this place," Harry smiled. "I may have finally found my home."

"Maybe," one of the monks smiled. "Or maybe you've just reached a way point in your journey around the wheel, only time will tell."

The days turned into weeks and the weeks to months, Harry spent untold hours learning to calm and to eventually master his mind and mental defences became absolute. Taking a deep breath, Harry shrugged off his red robes and again donned the clothing that he had worn when he came into the this place.

"Leaving?" One of the monks smiled at Harry's preparations.

"Yes," Harry nodded. "I can't believe I spent so much time here, I'd better be getting back."

"Time is not a concern for you," the monk smiled. "And you must only go back when it is your time to go back, do not make the mistake of returning too soon."

"Thank you," Harry took one last look around. "I'm going to miss this place, thank you for allowing me to stay here."

"All are welcome here," the old monk smiled. "And perhaps you may return in time, the future is yet unwritten and who can say where your path may take you."

Harry shouldered his pack and walked out the large gates. Harry shook his head in wonder upon seeing a small figure standing in the distance.

"I can't believe you waited this long," Harry smiled as he walked up to his guide. "How did you know when I was going to come out?"

"They always come out about five minutes after they go in," the guide shrugged. "I'd think that they'd like to stay longer but . . ."

Harry looked back at the blank spot of ground that had held the massive city only moments before.

"Why does this always happen to me?" He moaned, "why can't I ever have a normal day?"

"I don't know," the guide shrugged. "Maybe you're the universe's spittoon."

"Probably," Harry nodded. "It would certainly explain some things."

"Just follow this path down and you'll get where you need to be," the guide pointed out a worn track. "And have a pleasant journey."

"Thank you," Harry walked spent several minutes walking down the path and after a few twists and turns was surprised to find himself back on the beach that he had visited with the Professor and Henchgirl.

"Didn't you just leave?" The Doctor blinked at Harry's sudden appearance.

"I . . . think so," Harry frowned. "I'm not sure though."

"Since you're here . . . "

"Yes?"

"Could you rub this lotion on my back?"

"Sure," Harry shrugged. It wasn't Shangri La but rubbing lotion on the back of a beautiful woman was nothing to sneer at.

|||||||

While Harry had his existential experiences, his friends were meeting to decide the form that their new home would take.

"I don't care if it is traditional," the Professor glared at Henchgirl and the Architect. "The castle will not look like a giant skull . . . the island isn't even a volcano."

"How about some sort of Gothic monstrosity?" The architect suggested, "filled with secret passages and such."

"It's also traditional," Henchgirl mused. "A bit older tradition but still . . ."

"I can live with that," the Professor nodded. "Let's get started on our respective parts."

|||||||

"Well?" The dark lord leaned forward.

"Nothing happened master," the nervous death eater was shaking. "We showed up and nothing happened."

"What?"

"The team got ready and we all took our positions," tears fell under the death eater's mask and his voice became shrill. "Nothing happened, wormtail ate some bad shrimp and had to get his stomach pumped, then he was hit by one of those street taxis, and then he ate some bad curry and is currently making my Lord's water closet smell like a week old corpse . . . other than that, nothing happened."

"If nothing happened," the dark lord asked in false calm. "Then why did half the team burst into tears when they got back? Why did the other half wet themselves? AND WHY WON'T YOU STOP SHAKING?"

"He's just trying to trick us," the death eater giggled insanely. "Trying to get us to drop our guard . . . but . . . but we're too smart for that."

"CRUCIO," Voldemort had to resist the urge to cry . . . you just couldn't get good minions anymore.

AN: There really are large titanium deposits in India on the beaches.

Desert-Lifeblood – Go for it

I Miss Thailand

"Well," the Doctor stretched. "I suppose we'd better get back to the Zeppelin."

"I guess," Harry agreed triggering the port.

"Welcome back my friend," the Professor smiled. "I trust you had fun."

"Let's just say that it was enlightening," Harry grinned. "Did you all have fun?"

"Yes we did," the Professor nodded. "The Architect has gone off to the island to do his initial survey and we've contacted several other goblins about our plan to mine titanium."

"Great," Harry nodded. "Absolutely great."

"On a side note," the Professor smiled. "We've picked up two new crew members, a Tailor and his wife."

"What are their names?" Harry blinked, that shopkeep moved up another place on the list.

"I can't pronounce them," the Professor shrugged. "So we've just been calling them the Tailor and the Leather Worker."

"Oh . . . thats nice," Harry nodded.

"Let's go to the bridge," the Professor smiled. "So that we may set a course for our next destination."

"Ok," Harry shrugged.

Harry and the Professor walked to the bridge and Harry made a beeline to the center of the room after he got through the door.

"Where to now?" The Professor asked ignoring the way Harry had taken the Zeppelin's wheel and the 'vrooming' sounds he was making.

"Thailand," Harry smiled. "Great beaches and cool temples."

"Henchgirl," the Professor turned. "Set a course for Bangkok . . . do it NOW."

"You really need to find a better end to that," Henchgirl replied as she locked in the course. "Do it NOW just doesn't flow."

"I know," the Professor drooped. "But you guys voted down my suggestion of hiring script writers to get us all really cool lines."

"I'll just go down to my cabin," Harry backed out of the room. "And let the two of you resolve this conversation in peace."

"He's gone," the Professor peaked through the door to watch Harry leave.

"Good," Henchgirl took the wheel. "Vroom vroom."

"I'm next," the Professor eyed the wheel. "So don't take too long."

IIIIIIIIII

"We have arrived," the Professor smiled as he told Harry. "Henchgirl and I are going to head for the beach after we drop you off."

"I'll meet you there later tonight," Harry nodded.

"No need," the Professor blinked. "We can return later tonight if you wish."

"That'll work," Harry nodded. "What are the others doing?"

"The Doctor is going to visit a red cross snake farm, the Architect is starting construction of your dark fortress, and the Tailor and his wife are coming with us to the beach."

"Snake farm?" Harry blinked.

"She says that parts of it are open to the public," the Professor shuddered. "Not for me thanks."

"Have fun at the beach," Harry got on the PortTrans pad. "Port me down."

Harry arrived in front of a large statue in the middle of a roundabout and took a moment to admire the large bronze statue. Shrugging his shoulders, he walked over to the road and hailed a cab.

"Yes," the man rolled down his window.

"First of all," Harry smiled. "Where am I?"

"Wang Win Yai," the cab driver smiled. "Where would you like to go?"

"Is the snake farm near here?" Harry got in the cab.

"Not far," the man nodded. "It's over the bridge and a bit up the road."

"Then let's go there," Harry nodded. "I've got a friend that's visiting the place and I want to see what all the fuss is about."

The Cab turned down one of the many streets feeding the roundabout and continued up it for several blocks.

"So what are you doing in Thailand?" The cab driver asked with a smile.

"Just visiting," Harry shrugged. "Seems like a nice place."

"Where are you from," the driver glanced back.

"England," Harry looked out the window and noticed that the cab was pulling over a bridge.

"Nice place?"

"It's not bad," Harry nodded.

The cab pulled off the bridge and past a large hospital, "that big building up ahead is the place."

"Great," Harry nodded pulling out his wallet. "Let me off on the curb up here."

"Have a nice day," the driver leaned back and held out his hand.

"Here you are," Harry glanced at the meter and handed the driver about five hundred Baht.

Harry got out of the cab and waited at the curb for the light to change. Rushing across, Harry walked through a large gate and looked in awe at the large building.

Paying the fee, Harry walked into the park and looked down into the large enclosures at the large snakes.

"Hello," he hissed down at one of the large snakes. "What kind of snake are you?"

"A king cobra," the snake replied lazily. "Are you here to watch my show?"

"Yes," Harry hissed back.

"It will be a while," the snake raised its head.

"Thank you," Harry smiled.

"That was extraordinary interesting," a voice from behind startled Harry. "I haven't seen one of your kind here for quite some time."

"My kind?" Harry raised an eyebrow.

"A Parselmouth," the man nodded. "Did he tell you if he was happy here?"

"We mostly talked about the show," Harry shrugged.

"Fascinating," the small man seemed to zone out for a moment. "Forgive my manners, I am Doctor Hanuman Kanchanaburi."

"Mister Black," Harry nodded. "What do you do here?"

"I work for the red cross," Doctor Kanchanaburi smiled proudly. "We use the snake venom to make anti venom to treat snake bites."

"Sounds interesting," Harry nodded. "How many snakes do you have here?"

"Quite a few," the man shrugged. "I don't know exactly, I just work with the venom . . . may I ask you a question?"

"Sure," Harry nodded.

"We have a woman here with some extraordinary blood samples that she tells us she got from a man named Mr. Black, would you happen to be the same Mr. Black?"

"I might be," Harry shrugged. "I have a friend here that might have brought some blood samples."

"Then could we go meet with her to make sure that this isn't some sort of mistaken identity?" Doctor Kanchanaburi smiled, "I very much want to try an experiment with her Mr. Black and I wish to be sure that he is you."

"OK," Harry's eyes crossed a bit. "Will it take long? There are a few other things I'd like to try today."

"No, not long." The man shook his head, "at least in the short term. You'll have plenty of time to come back and see the snake show."

Harry followed the other man into the building and up a flight of stairs.

"Hello Mr. Black," the Doctor smiled at Harry's entrance. "What are you doing here?"

"The Professor mentioned that you were going to visit this place and I thought I'd see what it was," Harry smiled. "I've already had a nice conversation with one of the snakes and with Doctor Kanchanaburi."

"One of the snakes?" The Doctor blinked, "that's a very rare gift."

"So I've been told," Harry gave a dry smile. "Doctor Kanchanaburi wanted to try something."

"I wanted to confirm that he'd have no problems with other venom types after getting a look at the blood and venom samples you brought," Kanchanaburi nodded. "If you both agree then I'd like to inject Mr. Black with a small amount of cobra venom."

"I don't have any problems with that," Harry shrugged. "Doctor?"

"I don't think it would do any harm," the Doctor nodded.

"Excellent," Kanchanaburi smiled. "And I assure you that there is no danger to you, we have ample supplies of anti venom on hand to handle any emergencies that might occur."

Harry rolled up his sleeve and presented his bare arm. "Go ahead."

Kanchanaburi pulled out a small needle and handed it to the Doctor. "Since you are his regular physician, it might be best for you to handle the actual injection."

"Alright," the Doctor swabbed a small patch of skin and inserted the needle.

"What we are going to do is monitor you for several minutes to see what if any effect the venom has on you body," Kanchanaburi smiled. "After that I'd like to take a couple blood samples for further study."

"Ok," Harry nodded. "What then?"

"Then," the Doctor smirked. "He's going to come to me on his knees to beg me to let him give me samples of more venom to inject you with."

"And offer you one of my children to get more blood samples and raw data," Kanchanaburi laughed. "You are an evil evil woman to let me think that you might not share this research opportunity."

"Oh Hanuman," the Doctor fluttered her eyelashes. "You say the sweetest things."

"This all hinges on you granting me permission to pursue this course of study," Kanchanaburi smiled. "And I don't lie when I say I'll be crushed if you don't give it."

"You've got it," Harry watched the Doctor write down a few readings out of the corner of his eye. "Finding anything?"

"Something odd," the Doctor nodded.

"What is it?" Kanchanaburi asked eagerly.

"His blood immediately altered in response to the new type of venom and his body redirected the infected blood to the area around the piece of fang in his bone," the Doctor shook her head. "I am going to have to run several more tests."

"Altered how?" Harry asked nervously.

"I expected the venom to have little or no effect," the Doctor looked up from her notes. "Instead your body changed to the new type of venom and made you immune to it . . . I'm not sure why it moved to the area around your old bite."

"Probably a function of the device you put in," Harry shrugged. "What happens now?"

"Now?" The Doctor smirked, "you go and watch the show. Later, we see what we can do with the data we've gathered."

"Thank you for allowing me to work with you," Doctor Kanchanaburi gave a wide smile. "It has been a pleasure."

"Happy to help," Harry waved goodbye and walked back to the outdoor snake enclosure to watch the show.

Harry spent several enjoyable minutes watching small men lift, feed, and milk snakes larger than they were. At the conclusion of the show, Harry walked off the compound and hailed another cab.

"Where would you like to go?" The cab driver asked as Harry entered the cab.

"Kao Sanh Road," Harry replied quickly. "I've heard that it's a good place to hang out."

"Maybe," the cab driver shrugged. Traffic was lite and it only took a few minutes to arrive. Paying his fare, Harry got out of the cab and looked around. An entire street was blocked off and filled with backpackers.

Smiling, Harry walked into the crowd to see what they were doing and became disappointed after walking up the street. The entire place seemed like it contained nothing but cheap youth hostels and travel agencies. Sighing, Harry walked up to one of the blue buildings and sat on the curb.

"What's wrong?" A pair of buxom Swedish backpackers stopped by Harry.

"My guide book talked about how great this place was and it's a bit of a let down," Harry sighed.

"It gets much better at night," the girls smiled. "Come back then and you'll be amazed at the difference."

"Thanks," Harry cheered up. "Have you two had breakfast yet?"

"You offering?" The girls giggled.

"Sure," Harry nodded. "Where would you like to go?"

"The blue building over there has good Italian," the girls smiled. "Or we could go to one of the street vendors a few streets over."

"Thai sounds good," Harry smiled. "Never thought it made much sense to go to a country and not eat the food."

"Then we know just the place," one of the girls smirked. "It has great food and it's not far from here."

Harry and the girls walked to the restaurant and made their order.

"Be warned," one of the girls smirked when the food arrived. "The food here is really spicy."

"You weren't kidding," Harry nearly choked on his first bite. "It's good though."

"There are a few shops that we wanted to check out after this," the girls shared a smile. "Would you like to tag along."

"Sure," Harry shrugged and as soon of they finished the food found himself dragged into a small shop.

The place was filled with small bronze statues and wood carvings.

"Is there something I can help you with?" The young woman behind the counter gave a wide smile as the trio entered.

"I was hoping to get one of those statues," one of the girls pointed to a statue behind the counter.

"I wanted some carvings," the other girl pointed to several small wooden carvings. "And could you wrap them up?"

"Of course," the woman nodded and turned to Harry. "What about you?"

"Well . . ." Harry looked around the shop and noticed one item that seemed to glow under his mage sight. "I'd like that Amulet."

"Good eye," the woman nodded. "Many people think that they bring good luck."

"That could be useful," Harry paid for his purchase.

"Would you mind helping us carry all this to our hotel room?" The girls indicated their purchases, "it's not heavy but it is awkward to carry all that without a bag."

"Sure," Harry nodded. "Happy to help."

The girls led Harry down one of the many side streets, past a barber pole, and across another street to a small hotel.

"Nice place," Harry looked admired the surroundings that were much better than the usual youth hostel.

"It costs a bit more," the girls nodded. "But it's much cleaner and more comfortable."

Harry walked out of the hotel a few hours later and hailed another cab.

"Where to?"

"Sakhumvit," Harry closed his eyes and started listening to the radio.

IIIIIIII

"Well?" Voldemort scowled.

"We've found him master," Wormtail cowered. "He's in Thailand."

"Take some recruits and kill him," Voldemort was starting to get tired of having to do this every few days.

"Thank you master," Wormtail nodded. "It shall be as you say."

"This is just a small taste of what awaits you if you fail me . . .
CRUCIO."

Peter writhed in agony for a few moments until Voldemort lifted the curse. Not wasting a moment, he rushed out of the room and grabbed a few recruits.

"You," Wormtail pointed. "And your two friends."

"What is it?" The young recruit had heard stories about what happened to death eaters that went with the rat.

"The dark lord has ordered me to take you hunting," Wormtail sneered. "Come with me."

The three death eaters arose with great reluctance and followed the rat like man.

"Touch this portkey," Wormtail sneered.

"Not a chance," one of the braver recruits shook his head. "I've heard about what happens when you try to portkey after Black."

"We're not Portkeying to Black," Wormtail smirked. "We're going in a few blocks away . . . Black won't have time to work his little tricks on us."

"Where are we going?" The recruit wanted to stall as long as he could . . . maybe Black would have left the area before they got there.

"Some place called Cowboy," Wormtail was starting to lose his temper. "Now take the damn portkey."

Sharing one last glance and with great reluctance, the death eaters placed their palms on the portkey.

"What's going on?" One of the recruits called out, the portkey had landed them in a large crowd and he watched as several muggle women grabbed his companions and began dragging them away.

"Don't do anything," Wormtail was a bit annoyed that none of the girls were showing any interest in him, "we can't afford to cause a scene . . . make your way towards Black and we'll attack him when we've had a chance to regroup."

"Understood," the recruit nodded as he was pulled into one of the surrounding bars.

Transforming to rat form, Peter made his way to the spot that his contacts had told him that he would find the mysterious Mr. Black.

Peter spent several minutes observing the man that he believed to be Mr. Black before he was rejoined by his team.

"What took you so long?" Peter growled.

"Those girls were really persistent," one of the recruits replied nervously.

"And they were stronger than they looked," another agreed. "They wouldn't let me go."

"Whatever," Wormtail sneered. "We'll wait until we have a good chance to take him and then we'll attack."

|||||||

Harry got out of his cab and began walking up the long boulevard. Occasional glances down the side streets alternately shocked and embarrassed the boy as he took in the things that Bangkok had to offer.

After a time, he became aware of a strange itch in the center of his back. A quick look around did little to stem his growing nervousness and Harry quickly darted down one of the side streets in hopes of either losing his perusers or finding a more isolated place to bring matters to their natural conclusion.

Ten minutes and several curves found Harry walking into a deserted alley way. Concealing himself in one of the door ways, Harry waited for his shadows.

"We know you're here Black," Wormtail called out nervously. "Come out without your wand and we won't hurt any Muggles."

"Wormtail," Harry growled. Seconds later, a muttered incantation caused a long whip of fire to emerge from his wand.

"I said drop the wand or I'll start killing muggles," Wormtail was sure that Black wasn't the sort to let innocents die and he had spent much of his convalescence thinking up this plan of attack.

"Die," Harry flicked the tip of his wand and sent the stream of fire hurtling towards the rat's face.

Wormtail screamed as he felt the fire burn off part of his face and his hands groped frantically for the portkey that was his only means of escape. The rat was lucky and managed to find and activate his portkey only moments before Harry's next attack would have ended his life.

The stunned death eaters nearly wet themselves at Mr. Black's eyes flicked away from the spot that had been occupied by his last victim and focused on them.

"Hell with this," one of the recruits screamed. "Apparitate out."

The other recruits nodded fearfully and attempted to make their escape, the dangers were great. Apparition was dangerous in the best of times, adding in the stress of combat . . . well, let's just say that their chances of survival were only marginally higher than they'd be if they had chosen to stay behind.

Harry growled as he watched the death eaters escape. Mentally adding another check mark next to the list of times he had let Wormtail escape, Harry sighed . . . it had all been going so well until this happened.

"What's going on?" Several men stormed the alley with wands drawn.

"Death eater attack," Harry slowly lowered his wand. "They all got away."

"Your name sir?" The man at the front of the group pulled out a small magical recording device.

"Mr. Black," Harry didn't notice the men sharing shocked glances. "And it looks like those morons have managed to spoil my day again."

"I see," the man turned off the device and put it in his pocket. "You may go."

"Thank you," Harry pocketed his wand and walked out of the alley . . . why did these things keep happening to him?

"Why did you let him go?" One of the other Law Enforcement Officers watched Harry's departure.

"Didn't you hear his name?" The man at the front smirked.

"What about his name?"

"Mr. Black is one of the most dangerous men in the world," the man shook his head. "And from what I know of him, he wouldn't have done anything without good reason . . . besides, what do I care if a long nose decides to kill a bunch of other long noses?"

"Sir," one of the other men interrupted. "The wards picked up the signature of several Apparition accidents down the street that occurred right before we arrived . . . do you think we should check them out?"

"Why not," the man shrugged. "Might be fun to hear what they have to say."

The men made their way down the street and spent several minutes admiring the pulsating mass of flesh that had once been a death eater hunter killer team.

"I heard he liked to make things look like accidents," the man nodded with no small amount of satisfaction. "Nice to see that my information is accurate."

"What do you want us to do?"

"Take them back to headquarters and see if you can't get them fixed," the man smirked. "I'd like to have a bit of fun with them."

IIIIIIII

"What happened?" The death eater's eyes cracked open.

"I was hoping that you could tell me," the death eater turned to regard the small man in an official looking uniform next to his bed.

"I'm not saying anything," the death eater growled defiantly.

"Your friends said something similar," the man nodded. "Very well . . . you're free to go."

"What?" The death eater's eyes widened.

"You're free to go," the man in the uniform gave a frightening smile. "As far as I can tell, you've broken no laws during your stay so you may go."

"I can't go," the death eater shook his head. "He'll kill me."

"That is not my concern," the man in the uniform shrugged. "You have broken no laws so I cannot hold you and so you may go."

"I've broken plenty of laws," the death eater stammered. "I'll tell you anything you want to know just don't let him get me."

"Yes," the man in the uniform nodded. "Your friends said something similar to that as well . . ."

IIIIIIIIII

Peter was engaged in an activity that he rarely indulged in . . . thinking. Before he had counted himself lucky to escape from his encounters with Mr. Black with his life. Now . . . now he was having to consider something very frightening.

"He's killing me one piece at a time," Peter shuddered. "He's making it slow, drawing it out to make it worse."

Peter was a coward, that was one of many things that he had to accept about himself. He wasn't strong, he wasn't handsome, and he wasn't brave. He had joined Voldemort out of fear, he had betrayed his friends out of fear, and he had spent years posing as a family's pet rat out of fear.

"He's going to kill me after he tires of this game," Peter didn't want to die. "I've got to think of a way to stay safe."

AN: Wang Win Yai is very near where my apartment was, has a good ice cream shop there and I used to get shakes every day or two. I miss Thailand and I've been to most of the places in this chapter. The conversations with the cab drivers were all taken from my memories (Even the very short ones). If you want to know what Harry did in that hotel room, he was playing chess.

OMAKE: That has nothing to do with the story.

Harry walked into the girl's hotel room and put the items on the bed.

"We must confess," one of the girls smiled. "That there was another reason we wanted you to come up here."

"What's that?" Harry's eyebrows raised.

"We're members of an elite Swedish agency," one of the buxom girls replied.

"Code name Swedish Bikini Team or SBT," the other girl added. "And we want you to join us."

"Would I have to become female?" Harry eyed the exit.

"No," the girls shook their heads. "We could always use someone to rub sun tan oil on us, that will be your cover."

And so Harry lived out a happy life and as for Voldemort . . . he choked to death or something.

Taken from Harry's guide book:

Japan is a wonderful country, a mix between old and new. Japan is also one of the few places that normal pure blood attire doesn't usually merit a second glance. To reach the wizarding section of Tokyo, get off at JR Harajuku station and follow the signs to the Meji Jingu. When you arrive at the Tori (shrine gates) look for a path going around the left column of the main gate . . .

Harry ported down to the Harajuku section of Tokyo and his jaw dropped, he saw women in black wedding dresses, women in black ball gowns, women in white wedding dresses, men in white wedding dresses, street performers, a giant condom store. Blinking quickly and giving himself a quick pinch, Harry assured himself that he was not dreaming and continued to gawk. Before today he had thought wizards were strange . . . now he understood what his guide book had been referring to.

Unwilling to ask why the people were dressed as they were and unable to stop looking, it took Harry several minutes to walk the hundred or so meters to the entrance to the magical district.

Taking one last glance over his shoulder, Harry walked around the massive Tori and found himself in the middle of a section of town that would not look out of place in the Edo era.

"Excuse me," Harry walked up to a small street stand.

"Yes?" The woman at the stand nodded.

"Could I have some of that . . . what ever it is you're cooking?" Harry smiled, "it smells really good."

"Ok," the woman nodded. "It's called Gyudon by the way, would you like extra sauce with that?"

"Sure," Harry nodded as he smiled down at his bowl of beef and rice. "Do you have any suggestions on things to do around here?"

"Visit a shrine, go see a sumo match." The woman shrugged, "what do you like doing."

"Either of those sounds fine," Harry smiled. "Is there a shrine around here?"

"You walked through one to get here," the woman smirked. "They've got a magical section down the street a bit."

"Thanks," Harry finished his food and looked up. "How much."

"Five Ryo," the woman held out her hand. "How did you like it."

"It was great," Harry paid for his meal and got up. "Thanks."

Walking over to the shrine, Harry spent several minutes admiring the Miko as they performed their duties before walking up to the counter.

"Would you like to have your fortune told?" The pretty Miko behind the counter asked with a smile.

"Sure," Harry shrugged. "Why not."

The woman picked up an object that looked like a long section of closed pipe and shook it for a few seconds before turning it over. Harry watched as a small metallic rod fell out of the top of the pipe.

"One moment," the girl squinted at the rod then reached into a box to match the writings on a small card with the inscriptions on the rod. "It says here that you will live a long and exciting life filled with danger and strange situations . . . I've never pulled that one before." The miko handed Harry the card, "would you like anything else?"

"What are those things," Harry pointed to several small brightly colored bags.

"Those are charms," the woman smiled. "This one is for good child birth, this one is for good luck, this one is to ward against bad luck, and this one is to help with tests."

"I'll take the anti bad luck charm," Harry smiled. "Who needs good luck, when I need all the help I can get to keep the bad away."

The woman gave a pretty smile, "do you want anything else?"

"Give me a couple of the good study ones," Harry smirked. "I've got a friend that kill me if I didn't get her one and another friend that needs help."

"Here you are," the woman put them inside a small bag. "Thank you for coming."

"Have a nice day," Harry paid for the items and began walking away. "What to do."

A bit of movement out of the corner of his eye drew his attention and he looked down at the strange little fox that appeared to be following him.

"Hello," Harry smiled. "What are you doing here?"

"Oh darn," the fox transformed into a cute young girl with two bushy red tails. "How did you see me."

"I get followed a lot," Harry shrugged. "And so I guess I'm just more vigilant than most people."

"I guess," the girl pouted.

"Why were you following me?"

"I wasn't gonna do much," the girl smiled nervously. "Just play a little trick on you."

"You like jokes?" Harry chuckled, "I've got a couple of friends who'd love to meet you then."

"Really?" The girl perked up, "where are your friends?"

"England," Harry smirked. "Bit far from here."

"Oh," the girl's shoulders dropped.

"You can still write to them," Harry tried to cheer her up. "I'm Mr. Black by the way."

"Black?" The girl seemed to consider the name, "I've heard of you."

"Nothing bad I hope," Harry smiled.

"Not much," the girl shook her head.

"Do you mind if I ask what you are?" Harry glanced at the girl's tails.

"My name is Kumiko and I'm a kitsune," the girl replied proudly. "I've only got two tails but I'm working on getting more."

"Good luck," Harry nodded. "Do you know of any book stores around here?"

"Sure," the girl nodded. "There's one over there, and I think that Kumo will want to talk to you after that."

"Then why don't you show me this book store and then we can go talk to Kumo," Harry suggested.

"Ok," the girl nodded. "Come this way."

The book store was nothing special but Harry managed to find several tomes to add to his collection including one rather large book on native Japanese magical creatures.

"Can we go see Kumo now?" The girl seemed impatient for some reason.

"Sure," Harry nodded. "Let's go."

The girl led Harry through a confusing set of streets and alley ways before she finally stopped in front of a small temple.

"Kumo's in there," she smiled. "Can you tell me how to contact your friends that like jokes?"

"Sure," Harry nodded. "Just contact Fred and George Weasley in England, I'm sure that they'll be happy to talk about playing tricks on people."

"Thank you," the girl gave him a quick peck on the cheek then turned back into a small two tailed fox and scurried away.

Harry's hand reached up to touch his cheek by reflex and he grinned widely, being kissed by a pretty girl was another one of the small pleasures that he had learned to enjoy this summer.

Shaking his head to clear his thoughts, Harry walked into the temple and looked around. "Hello?"

"Yes?" A man dressed as a Buddhist monk stepped out. "Ah, a guest . . . and one that's started on the path to enlightenment. What can I do for you?"

"A kistune named Kumiko told me to talk to someone named Kumo," Harry smiled.

"I'm Kumo," the man nodded. "Who might you be?"

"I'm Mr. Black," Harry smiled. "So I guess the question is, what can I do for you?"

"Ah yes," the man nodded. "I've heard of you . . . as for what you can do . . . well, we're having a bit of a problem."

"What kind of problem?" Harry sighed.

"A yuki onna has moved onto one of the mountains north of here," Kumo began. "And she's shown herself to be very dangerous . . . I was hoping that you'd be willing to help us deal with her."

"I'll go up and have a look around," Harry nodded. "But I'm not going to promise anything more than that."

"That is plenty," Kumo smiled. "I suggest you catch the next train so that you can . . ."

"Train?" Harry interrupted.

"It's a large device that goes on a pair of parallel tracks," Kumo explained. "They go very fast and . . ."

"I know about trains," Harry interrupted again. "I was just surprised that you didn't want me to take a portkey or something."

"Horrid things," Kumo sniffed. "And difficult to get in this country, most Japanese use magical Shinkansen to get where they want to go."

"Then I guess I'll take the train," Harry shrugged.

The two of them went to the train station and Harry ordered his ticket.

"Good luck Mr. Black," Kumo called out as Harry walked through the turnstile.

Harry walked to the platform and gasped in shock as he watched the shinkansen glide up the tracks, the magical train was much sleeker and looked more modern than the humble Hogwarts express.

"Professor," Harry pulled out his zippo.

"Yes my friend?" The Professor's voice responded.

"I don't think you'll ever forgive yourself if you don't come to the magical section of Tokyo and go to the train station to see their enchanted trains," Harry smiled. "They've even got an enchanted modern train."

"Thank you," Henggirl's voice replied. "The Professor would have responded but we just started walking through a section of town called Akihabara and it's filled with electronic shops . . . coupled with hearing about the enchanted trains, well . . . he just couldn't handle the excitement and fainted."

"Ok," Harry shrugged. "Well, I'm going up north to take care of some kind of monster so I'll be out for a day or two."

"Have fun," Henggirl replied.

"Later," Harry closed his connection and got on the train.

Harry spent most of the train ride going over his book on Japanese magical creatures and by the time it pulled into his stop he was confident that he had at least a rudimentary idea of what he was going to face.

Shouldering his pack, he got out of the train and began walking into the hills to find the creature that he had been sent to subdue.

His first challenge came when he was about to cross a small stream.

"Stop," a small creature that bore a strong resemblance to a turtle with a pool of water in its head stepped out of the stream. "You cannot cross my stream."

"You're a kappa aren't you?" Harry smiled down at the odd creature.

"I am," the creature gave a proud nod.

"So that means that I can either tip the water out of your head or offer to trade some cucumbers doesn't it?" Harry was glad that he had taken the time to read that book.

"Cucumbers?" The Kappa perked up.

"I bought several of them before I left town," Harry pulled the vegetables out of his pack. "And I'll trad them to you for passage across you stream to my destination and back from my destination for me and anyone with me."

"Fine," the Kappa nodded. "But only once each way, you'll have to give me more if you want to cross more."

"That's fair," Harry agreed as he handed over the cucumbers. "Have a good day."

Harry crossed the stream and walked deeper into the forest. As darkness began to fall, it began snowing and Harry decided that he had better make camp.

Using his knowledge of weather magic, Harry was able to create an area untouched by the storm to set up his tent and start a fire.

"I'm cold," an inhumanly pale girl with long lightly tinted blue hair stumbled towards Harry's fire. "So cold."

"Sit down," Harry pulled a large blanket out of his pack and hit it with a quick warming charm. "Take this, it'll warm you up."

"It's warm?" The girl seemed surprised, "so much wonderful heat."

"Yeah," Harry nodded. "You shouldn't be wondering around out here alone, you could freeze to death if you weren't careful."

"So warm," the girl seemed almost drunk of the heat. "Oh thank you."

"Don't mention it," Harry smiled. "Let's get you off this mountain."

"Off my mountain?" The girl blinked, "why?"

"There's supposed to be something dangerous up here," Harry smiled. "I came up to see if I could find it."

"Dangerous?" The girl blinked.

"Something that keeps it cold up here," Harry nodded. "They wanted me to come up here to kill it."

"Why would you kill me if I haven't done anything to you?" The wind began to pick up and the girl seemed to stiffen.

"Kill you?" Harry's eyes widened, "I don't have any intention of killing you or anyone else. I just wanted to see what was going on, figured that maybe I could help."

"Oh," the wind died and the girl relaxed.

"What are you?" Harry stirred the pot on the fire.

"I'm a yuki onna," the girl sighed. "Call me Oyuki."

"I'm Mr. Black, and you are what I've been looking for." Harry smiled. "It's nice to meet you."

"It's nice to meet you too," Oyuki smiled. "I need my cold . . . I can't give it up."

"You seem to like that blanket too," Harry tasted his soup and filled two cups. "Soup?"

"Thank you," the girl gave a curious sniff and then brought the cup to her lips. "It's good."

"I try," Harry grinned. "Why are the people so afraid of you?"

"They blame me for the people that die in the cold," the woman seemed to shrink.

"I don't," Harry refilled her cup.

"I'm frightened," Oyuki confessed. "They've sent hunters after me before but none of them have gotten so close."

"Do you need to stay here?" Harry refilled his own cup, "because I have a place you might like."

"Where is it?" The girl snuggled deeper into the blanket.

"Far to the south," Harry yawned. "And it is a very cold place."

"Can I still have the warmth?" Oyuki clutched her blanket.

"As much as you like," Harry yawned. "Can we continue this in the morning, I've got to get some sleep."

"Can I stay here?" Oyuki eyed him. "I like the warmth."

"You can stay in my tent if you like," Harry nodded. "I don't mind."

"Thank you," she smiled and followed him into the tent and its wonderful warmth.

Harry awoke late the next morning to the smell of something cooking.

"I made you something to eat," Oyuki smiled. "To thank you for the food last night."

"Thank you," Harry stretched out. "What did you make?"

"I caught a few rabbits and cooked them on the fire," Oyuki replied proudly.

"It smells good," Harry took a whiff of the burning bunny. "Thanks."

"How are we going to get to this place to the south?" Oyuki tended to her cooking.

"That depends," Harry took a deep breath. "Can you travel through warmer areas?"

"I can but I don't like it so much," Oyuki nodded.

"What about portkeys?"

"They should be ok," Oyuki nodded. "I had a cousin that used one once, she didn't like it though."

"She's not the only one who doesn't like them," Harry replied with a laugh. "How about we go to Tokyo and get a portkey from my friend to send you to my island."

"Oh that sounds wonderful," Oyuki nodded. "Thank you so much."

"Just give me a moment to arrange everything," Harry pulled out his zippo. "Professor."

"Yes my friend?" The Professor's voice replied.

"I need you to arrange a portkey to the island for a friend of mine," Harry yawned. "She's a yuki onna if that means anything to you."

"Indeed it does," the Professor replied. "Is it just for her or does she have friends that she wants to bring."

"Just me for now," Oyuki replied.

"She says that it's just her," Harry passed it along. "We'll be there to pick it up later today."

"And I shall have it waiting for you when you arrive," the Professor replied. "Professor out."

Harry and his new friend made their way back to town and bought two tickets to Tokyo and the Professor was waiting to meet them when they stepped onto the platform.

"Is this the one that needs a portkey?" The Professor smiled up at Oyuki.

"Yes she is," Harry nodded. "Is the Architect expecting her?"

"Yes he is," the Professor nodded. "He also requested that we make a side trip to the island so that you can set up a few wards."

"Ok," Harry nodded. "Did you ever make any progress on those undetectable wards?"

"I believe so," the Professor nodded. "We'll have to test it out later."

"Excuse me," Oyuki smiled. "But I'm getting a bit too warm and I was hoping to get that portkey."

"Yes of course," the Professor nodded. "Here you are, just say snow to activate it."

"Thank you," Oyuki gave Harry a kiss on the cheek and handed him a small glass vial filled with a clear liquid. "Show this to the man that sent you, he should know what to do with it."

"Alright," Harry nodded. "I hope you like the island."

"Oh I will," Oyuki nodded. "Good bye . . . snow."

"What was she?" The Professor watched as the strange girl disappeared.

"Just a girl that needed help," Harry smiled. "I've got an errand to run before we leave."

"I shall prepare the Zeppelin for departure," the Professor nodded. "I shall see you soon."

"Later," Harry nodded.

It took him a few minutes of walking to get back to the Temple where he had met Kumo.

"Back so soon?" Kumo's eyes lit up in shock, "decided not to bother with things?"

"No I solved your problem," Harry pulled out the small vial that he had been given. "I sent her to an island where she won't be bothered and she told me to show you this."

"You didn't kill her," Kumo smiled. "It is rare to see such respect for life in a man with your skills, come with me."

"Why?" Harry trailed behind the man.

"Because you are getting a tatto," Kumo smiled. "Just a small one and it won't take long."

"Why am I doing that?" Harry had an amused expression on his face.

"Because of the gift she gave you," Kumo nodded. "She gave you a bit of herself, the only way I know of to use it is to give you a tatto. It will be quite advantageous, it'll give you a resistance to cold and a greater affinity to cold and ice spells."

"What will it look like?" Harry sighed, he supposed that he couldn't pass up something that useful.

"Whatever you like," Kumo shrugged.

"How about a small snowflake," Harry smiled. "seems appropriate."

"Alright," Kumo nodded as he pulled out his tools. "It will not take long."

"Where is it?" Harry looked down to where the tatto was supposed to be.

"Move your arm a bit," Kumo smiled. "It's so pale that you cannot see it unless the light hits it at the correct angle."

"Ah," Harry nodded as his eyes finally made out the form of the pale blue snowflake. "Thank you."

"There was a small side effect that I did not expect," Kumo sighed. "It appears that being willingly has increased the potency and . . . well . . . why don't you have a look in this mirror."

"What am I looking for?" Harry stared in the mirror.

"Your hair," Kumo gave a weak smile. "Some of it has turned white."

"Oh yeah," Harry nodded. "Not too much but it's noticeable when you look for it."

"Yes . . . well I apologize for that," Kumo pulled out a small box.

"Don't worry about it," Harry shrugged. "And I had better be going."

"Before you go let me present you with this," Kumo handed Harry the box. "It is traditional to reward the hero before he rides off into the sunset."

"What is it?"

"It is a box," Kumo nodded. "Inside the box are a few items that you might find useful."

"What are the items?" Harry smirked.

"Another box," Kumo smiled. "That will have a small piece of gold in the shape of a rice grain once a day, a Mirror that will show a thing's true form, and a small jewel called a magatama."

"Thank you," Harry pulled out his zippo. "Professor . . . port me up."

"No, thank you." Kumo whispered after Mr. Black's departure, "for solving the problem and letting her live."

AN: I've been to most of the places in this chapter too. Shinkansen is a bullet train, I didn't even think of it when I wrote it because everyone that lives in Japan calls it by the Japanese name and I didn't feel like changing it either. A kitsune is a fox spirit that has a different number of tails depending on rank up to nine, they are said to be able to change into young women and they like to play pranks. A Yuki Onna is a traditional Japanese mythical creature, the translation is Snow Lady. She likes to freeze people to death and will sometimes take a mortal husband. A kappa is a sort of water goblin that likes cucumbers. Magical tattoos are quite common in Asia, almost had him get one in Thailand.

Gimme Another Oil Can

Taken from Harry's guide book

Australia is a lovely country that holds within its borders some of the loveliest beaches in the world. As many people know, many of the early settlers of Australia were convicts that had been arrested for crimes as petty as stealing a loaf of bread. What many people do not know is that this policy was instituted by an unknown and presumably overworked Ministry Employee, who was angered at having his holiday canceled. He drafted a law that roughly stated, 'any citizen that steals a loaf of bread shall be punished by being sent to Australia, where he shall be forced to surf and spend his time some of the greatest beaches in the world.' The historical record is a bit unclear after that, because moments after the policy was adopted the aforementioned Ministry Employee was arrested for the crime of stealing bread and sent to Australia . . . as were several of his successors. This had the odd side effect of draining most of the Ministry's talented people into Australia and leaving the Ministry in the hands of corrupt and incompetent fools. It is interesting to note that the consequences of this unfortunate policy still haunt England's Ministry of Magic. (For further reading see the section of this book pertaining to the election of England's current Minister of Magic, Cornelius Fudge.

Australia is not without its dangers and every animal in the country can be classified as belonging to one or more of the three categories: Dangerous, Poisonous, and sheep. This is due to the fact that Australia has one of the largest levels of ambient magic in the world. The result of this is that Australian magical fauna is so plentiful that it is nearly impossible to conceal it from the non magical populations. This problem was addressed by making no attempt to hide the most common magical creatures and at current time, most non magical peoples think that animals such as the Kangaroo or Koala are as mundane as they are. This program was not always met with success, see section on the Thylacine in appendix Theta23.

|||||||

"What have you got for me Professor?" Harry asked the smaller man.

"I've been working non stop since you told me of your plans to go to Australia, and I've developed some specialized equipment for you to test out." The Professor turned, "Henchgirl, bring the item."

"Yethss, Masthter," the girl shambled in dragging a large case behind.

"Put it on the table," the Professor nodded to his assistant, "and talk normally, if I've told you once I've told you a thousand times. No lisping."

"I was just trying to set the mood," the girl glared at her employer, "someone has to, with the way that you've been refusing to cackle insanely lately."

"We've had this discussion Henchgirl," the Professor ignored the glare, "and I for one don't want to be sued for copyright infringement. Now get back to work."

"This conversation isn't over," Henchgirl shot the professor another glare before smiling at Harry, "as soon as Mr. Black leaves, you and I are going to have another chat."

The Professor shuddered as he watched his assistant leave, "I'm in trouble aren't I?"

"Either that or she's keeping you off balance because she wants something," Harry shrugged, "don't suppose it matters much in the short run."

"Yes, well," the Professor turned his attention to the large case on the table, "as you know, nearly every animal in Australia falls into one or more of the following three categories; poisonous, dangerous, and sheep." He patted the case fondly, "and that's why I invented this little baby, it is an advancement on one of the most popular personal defence devices presently used in Australia."

"Wow," Harry replied in an awed tone as he opened the case, "what is . . . why does it look like a stick?"

"It's not just a stick," the Professor looked annoyed, "it's been reinforced by carbon nano tubes, weighted to increase damage, enchanted to feel light to the user and increase inertia, and it comes with this stylish carrying case."

"O . . . K," Harry nodded, "what am I suppose to do with it?"

"When traveling in Australia, you're bound to see some of the native wildlife." The small man began to lecture, "and when you do hit it with your personal defence device before it has a chance to attack."

"I think I can use this," Harry lifted the stick and tested it's weight.

"Good," the Professor nodded in satisfaction, "and before you leave, I have just one question."

"What's that?"

"Can I borrow your new Personal Defence Device?" The Professor asked nervously, "I still have to have that chat with Henchgirl." He paused and bit his lower lip, "and I when I do, I'd like to have logic, reason, and a large stick on my side."

"I'll just be going now," Harry backed out of the room and and ported down.

Harry felt a rush of energy as he looked around the new land, magic seemed to be as common as air in this country.

IIIIIIII

Peter was nervous, every thing he had done in his life was in the pursuit of one goal . . . staying alive. Shaking in fear, he sat down on his bed and tried to get to sleep. It was starting to look like he was not going to survive much longer, the dark lord wasn't going to stop sending him after Black . . . and he would guess that Black wasn't going to stop his . . . plans.

"If only I knew where Harry was," Wormtail sighed. "He'd be dumb enough to fall for some sob story about feeling guilty and wanting to

join the other side and I doubt Black would kill me if Harry wanted to let me live."

A distant creek nearby caused Peter to wet himself and his eyes snapped open.

"Maybe Dumbledore?" Peter shivered, "old fool's always willing to give a second chance." The question was if Black would be willing to leave things in the old man's hands, "probably not." Tears ran down Peter's face, what had he done to deserve this.

|||||||

Harry did what many travelers do when first in a new country, he found a bar.

"Evening," one of the patrons nodded his greeting. "New in town?"

"Just got in," Harry nodded. "Seems like a nice place so far."

"God's own land," the man nodded.

"Could I get a beer?" Harry smiled at the pretty bar tender, "what ever you think is good."

"Here ya go," the woman put a glass in front of Harry. "Drink up."

Harry and his group of new friends spent several hours drinking before someone put fourth the idea of visiting another fine drinking establishment. And so our hero and twelve of his newest friends stumbled out of the bar and down the street.

"Hey look . . . a giant mouse." Harry tried to focus on the large angry kangaroo blocking his path.

"Just back away mate," one of his suddenly sober drinking companions was busy hoping that he could save the new chum from a rather painful experience with the local wildlife.

"Wha?" Harry stumbled and missed getting kicked in a very sensitive place, "so you wanna fight then? Ok, let's fight."

Harry's group of drunken companions watched in shock as their new buddy drunkenly swayed out of the way of several kicks and then fell his opponent with a clumsy punch to the jaw.

"Why don't you come this way now mate," one of Harry's buddies took him by the arm. "There's another bar down the street."

"Didn't wanna fight," Harry stumbled off. "Never wanna fight but I always get into trouble."

"Don't worry about it mate," his buddy patted him on the shoulder. "He started it and there was nothing you could do."

"Just wanted to have a quiet time and look what had to happen," Harry gave a drunken belch. "Why does this always happen to me."

"Don't know mate," the man shrugged. "But I do know that another beer will make you feel better."

"Yeah I . . ." Harry froze, "always wanted one of those."

"Wanted one of what?" Harry's buddy blinked, "ah . . . well, try not to fall."

"What's all this then?" A police constable walked out of his station and watched as a man scaled the side of his building . . . with what seemed to be the intent to steal the sign.

"He's a Pom, just met him this arvo, he only flew in today, so we took him to the pub. Nice guy, bit enthusiastic at times, but damn he can drink." The constable chuckled and slipped the notepad back into his shirt. "No worries then, just make sure he doesn't get into trouble."

IIIIIIII

"My head," Harry dug himself out from under a pile of assorted street signs and looked around. "What did I do last night . . . and for that matter, where the hell am I?"

"Afternoon," a heavily tanned face looked down. "Was wondering when you'd wake up."

"Where am I?" Harry looked around at the desert landscape, "and how did I get here?"

"Came in last night on a broom," the man's smile deepened. "Fancy a cold one?"

"Sure," Harry took the oil can and tried to remember the past night's events. "I remember getting into a fight with someone . . . and something about a sign . . . and then it all goes blank."

"I wouldn't worry about it," the man shrugged. "She'll be right mate."

"I guess," Harry nodded. "Where am I anyway?"

"Nowhere," the man shrugged. "Nearest town is Coober Pedy if that means anything to you."

"No," Harry rubbed his eyes. "But at the moment it wouldn't matter if I'd been born there, can't think."

"Surprised you can breath after all those spider bites," the man chuckled. "But I suppose you're a lucky one."

"Spider bites?" Harry blinked.

"Yeah," the man nodded. "Figured you for a goner . . . didn't have enough time to brew up some potion and didn't have any on hand but you pulled through . . . can't say the same for the spiders."

"Oh," Harry blinked again. "I'm Mr. Black."

"Folks around here call me the Mechanic," the tanned man grinned. "It's cause of my habit of tinkering with things, both magic and non."

"Nice to meet you," Harry nodded. "Do you know how I get here?"

"Your guess is as good as mine mate," the Mechanic shrugged. "Staggered in last night, had a broom with you when you arrived but it wasn't in any condition to fly."

"Really?" The pounding in Harry's head started to go away, "do you know anyone that can you fix it?"

The mechanic sucked his breath through his teeth. "I dunno mate, I took a look and it's as ugly as a bucket of smashed crabs and half as friendly. I s'pose I could fix it, but the parts are gonna be a bitch. Ya ever considered using one of these instead?" The Mechanic held up an odd looking device that appeared to have been cobbled together from a sheet of corrugated iron, bailing wire, and half a roll of duct tape. "I've been tinkering with one of these for a bit and I managed to get nearly twice the performance of a firebolt . . . then again, the firebolt is a pommy piece of crap. No endurance, one good nip from a yabbie or bunyip and it goes to pieces . . . fancy another beer?"

"Sure," Harry shrugged. "You want a job?"

"What?" The Mechanic tossed over another oil can.

"I got a friend that would love to meet you," Harry explained. "Couple friends actually, they like to invent things too."

"Never said I was an inventor," the Mechanic frowned. "Just like to do a bit of tinkering in my spare time."

"Still," Harry pressed. "I think you'd be a great help, my friends are great but they can be a little . . . disconnected from reality."

"Heads stuck in the clouds?" The Mechanic nodded.

"Be good to have someone around that isn't insane," Harry mused. "Do you have a floo connection?"

"Never needed one," the Mechanic shrugged.

"Then do you mind if I leave you a cell floo?" Harry pulled one out of his pocket. "In case you change your mind? If this thing is half as good as you say it is then I know that there's a market for it."

"I suppose," the Mechanic scratched his chin. "Let me think about it for a bit, I'll be in touch."

"That's all I ask," Harry nodded. "How does this thing work?"

"Same as a broom," the Mechanic replied. "I assume you know how to use one of those?"

"Yeah," Harry nodded. "But won't I be seen on my way to . . . what was the name of that town again?"

Coober Pedy," the Mechanic smiled. "Don't worry about it, folks around here mind their own business and no tourists expect to see strange things in the outback."

"Ok," Harry shrugged. "Thanks, will a pointme charm get me to Coober Pedy?"

"Best let me show you a few charms to keep you alive in the desert before you go," the Mechanic smiled. "It's some of the most beautiful land on earth and some of least hospitable."

"I'm always happy to learn new spells," Harry smiled. "Especially when they might keep me alive."

"The willingness to learn enough to keep yourself alive puts you ahead of half the tourists that come out here," the Mechanic smiled. "The first charm is a water detection charm . . ."

IIIIIIII

"We've managed to get Black's location again master," random death eater #221 simpered.

"Have Wormtail take another team out to destroy him," the dark lord sighed. "And tell them to do it right this time."

"Thank you master," the death eater nearly broke into tears when he wasn't told to be on the team. "It shall be as you command."

"Crucio," the dark lord cast the spell reluctantly . . . it was starting to get a little old, what he needed to do was find a new pain causing curse.

"Thank you master," the death eater writhed on the ground until the curse ended. Then he jumped to his feet and rushed out of the room before the dark lord ordered him to accompany the suicide mission.

"Wormtail," the death eater's attempt to sneer was spoiled by his good mood. "The master has a little job for you."

"What is it?" Peter had to focus on his bladder to keep from losing control.

"The dark lord wishes you to get a team and put an end to Black once and for all," the death eater smirked. "I've already sent a man to get your portkey."

IIIIIIIIII

"We need another Portkey," the disguised death eater frowned at the clerk. "With as many safety features as you can add."

"Sure thing," the clerk shrugged. "But it'll be expensive."

"Whatever," the death eater waved off the concerns. "Just make sure that it doesn't cause people to plummet to their deaths . . . and make sure that it can't be controlled by an outside source, or cause people to reappear in an area too small to hold them."

"I've got just the thing," the portkey seller nodded. "It will put you on the ground, and it cannot be tampered with."

"Really?" The disguised death eater raised an eyebrow.

"If anything bad happens," the portkey seller smirked. "It won't be because of this portkey."

"Are you sure about that?"

"Yes," the portkey seller was losing track of the number of death eaters that he'd sent to their death . . . wasn't important but still, it would have been nice to know."

IIIIIIIIII

"Is everyone ready?" Wormtail looked around, praying for an excuse to delay the attack.

"Yes," the depressed death eaters nodded.

"No one has to use the water closet?" Wormtail was grasping at straws, "everyone has their wand?"

"Yes," shoulders slumped.

"Ok," Wormtail's eyes shut. "Here we go."

The death eaters immediately assumed formal dueling stances on their arrival and waited . . . and waited.

"Are you sure that this is Black's location?" One of the death eaters spoke up.

"Yes," Wormtail wet himself. "He's just waiting for us to let our guard down."

"Hey," one of the death eaters spoke up. "What's this thing?"

The assorted death eaters glanced over, "looks like some sort of animal." One shrugged, "poke it with a stick or something."

"Ok," the death eater took a few minutes to transfigure a rock into a stick. "Here we go."

Wormtail's first indication that something had gone wrong was a low growl from the mystery creature. Wormtail's second indication that something had gone wrong was the blood curdling screams of his group as the small funny looking creature tore them apart. And Wormtail's third indication that something had gone terribly wrong was a sharp pain in his buttocks as the small odd looking creature tore it off . . . it was then that he activated the portkey and escaped.

Above it all and oblivious to the carnage that was taking place below him, Harry Potter put the new broom through it's paces . . . if that Mechanic wouldn't come work for him then he was going to have to

come back for more of these things . . . they were great, the Mechanic wasn't kidding when he said it was better than the firebolt.

|||||

Wormtail reappeared in front of a group of excited death eaters, "it was an ambush . . . everyone is dead."

"Yes we know," one of the older death eaters nodded. "How did they die?"

"What?" Wormtail frantically applied pressure to his wounded buttocks, "help me."

"Oh very well," the older death eater cast a couple of quick clotting charms. "So how did they die?"

"Black conjured up some sort of horrible creature and had it attack," Wormtail spoke between screams of pain. "It tore everyone apart before we had a chance to fight back."

"Alright," the old death eater looked around. "Who had torn apart by some sort of horrible creature?"

"I did," one of the newer recruits waved his ticked. "Horay, I win the pool."

"Congratulations," the older death eater nodded. "Your share comes out to ten thousand gallons . . . now who had Wormtail survives but with a ruined buttocks?"

|||||

Harry landed beside an odd looking contraption that looked like an alien spacecraft, shrugging he turned to the nearest person.

"Excuse me," Harry smiled.

"Yeah?" The man raised an eyebrow.

"Could you tell me where the nearest bar is?" Harry sighed, "for some reason I really want something to drink that isn't water."

"I can understand that," the man nodded. "Up the street and to the left . . . just so's you know, it's underground."

"Oh," Harry blinked. "Sounds interesting."

"Have fun mate," the man nodded. "I'd like to stay and talk but there are Opals to be found."

"Good luck," Harry walked up the street and down to the bar.

"What can I do for you mate?" The bartender raised an eyebrow.

"A pint of whatever happens to be good," Harry yawned.

"Here you are," the bartender put a glass in front of Harry. "Just get in?"

"Yeah I . . . damn it," Harry flicked a spider off his arm and onto the bar.

"Mate," the bartender paled. "I don't know how to tell you this but . . . well."

"What he's trying to say is," everyone in the bar froze in shock as the Redback spider began suffering violent convulsions. "Cor . . . look at that."

"Poor thing never had a chance," the bartender shook his head as the spider made one last valiant effort to move before expiring.

"Sorry about that," Harry winced. "For some reason they keep doing that . . . not sure why."

"No worries," the bartender shook his head in shock. "What did you say your name was again?"

"Mr. Black," Harry sighed.

"Ah," the bartender nodded that explained everything.

"Ah," the men in the bar nodded.

"Fancy another drink?"

"Sure," Harry nodded. He was beginning to like this country, no death eater attacks, friendly people, and he could learn to live with constant spider attacks . . . wasn't like they were poisonous . . . right?

AN: Thank Finbar and the other people in my group from Australia. Harry is not bothered by poisons, that's why the spider bite didn't hurt him. Harry's blood is filled with all sorts of anti venom along with all sorts of other strange things, that's why the spider died.

OMAKE:

"You hear the joke about how the Ministry's decided to give Black the lead in fighting the death eaters?" The Unspeakable took a gulp of his drink.

"Tell us," one of the others raised his hand to signal another round.

"Well, he got the late Umbitch, the Aurors, and Black all together and then he let a rabbit loose in the forbidden forest." The Unspeakable giggled, "said that whoever caught the rabbit first would get the title of the best and be given the job of tracking down all the death munchers. Umbitch took one look at the forest and concluded that rabbits don't exist. The Aurors went in with fifty men and came out with ten . . . having fought a great battle with the rabbit and barely escaped with their lives. And Mr. Black . . . he didn't even bother to show up . . . three days later, the rabbit died . . . of 'natural causes'"

The men roared with laughter until one managed to gain enough self control to speak, "don't you mean that the rabbit died . . . in an 'accident'" This of course set off another round of laughter, needless to say that the joke wasn't appreciated when it finally made its way to the Department of Magical Incompetents . . . err . . . that is to say the Department of Magical Law Enforcement, sorry about that typo earlier.

The Past Revealed

"So what's your business Mr. Black?" The Bartender asked and the entire bar froze to hear the answer.

"I'm just a guy on vacation," Harry shrugged. "I'll admit that I've helped a few friends but other than that . . . well, I just want to have a bit of fun."

Yup, the bar patrons nodded . . . this was Mr. Black and not another poser trying to score free drinks.

"So what are you doing around here?" The bartender raised his eyebrow, "visiting the mines?"

"This just happened to be the nearest town," Harry took a sip of his drink. "Any recommendations?"

"You could try your luck at Opal mining," one of the patrons gave his opinion. "S' what the town was built around."

"Sounds interesting," Harry smiled. "How do you go about it?"

"Get a bit of land and go looking," the man shrugged. "No guarantee that you'll find anything but I enjoy it."

"How long does it take?" Harry took another sip, "I'm expecting a few of my friends to come by in a few hours."

"I'm Henry Blake and I'll tell you what," Henry smiled. "I'll let you poke over my land till your friends get here in a few hours and you can keep whatever you find."

"Sure," Harry finished his drink. "Don't know that I'll do it that long but it sounds like fun . . . what does an opal look like?"

"Just dig till you hear the sound of broken glass," Henry smiled. "And keep the rocks that make that sound."

"Ok," Harry nodded. "Where's your land?"

"Go down that hall till you come to a red door," Henry pointed. "Knock on the door and tell my wife what I told you, she'll show you to where we're digging."

"Thanks," Harry nodded. "But why is the entrance to your mine down this hall?"

"Cause it's also my house," Henry laughed. "When we were digging out my house we found enough opals to pay for the construction. I've got a little one on the way and I've been expanding the house a bit, haven't found anything much but I have high hopes that something will turn up."

"So it's not so much you letting me dig your mine," Harry smirked. "As you tricking me into building a new room for your house?"

"You got it mate," Henry laughed. "Mind you, I wish you the best of luck and I know that there are more opals down there . . ."

"Thanks," Harry smiled. "I'll see you in a few."

"Take as long as you like," Henry called after Harry. "With my luck she'll have triplets and I'll need a bigger room then I thought."

"You're playing with fire mate," one of the other patrons took a sip of his drink. "Black is a cold blooded killer . . . you saw what happened to that spider."

"He may be a killer but he's on our side," Henry smiled. "I'm not an outlaw and neither is my wife, what's the harm in letting the man have a bit of fun."

"With your luck he'll find a mess of opals and clean the room out," the bartender added his opinion. "You'll have your room but he'll have a million dollars."

"Probably," Henry nodded. "But I'll still have my room in ten years, who knows what would happen to all that money."

|||||||

"Excuse me," Harry knocked on the red door.

"Yes?" A very pregnant and very beautiful red headed woman answered the door with a large smile, "what can I do for you?"

"Henry told me I could come down here and try my luck for a few hours," Harry smiled. "That is if you don't mind."

"You do know that he's just trying to get out of digging the bloody room himself don't you?" The woman raised an eyebrow, "he's been trying that trick on tourists for the last week."

"I know," Harry nodded. "And I'll bet I'm the first one dim enough to fall for it, especially since he admitted what his intentions were."

"You're right about that," the woman laughed. "Come in and make yourself comfortable, I'm Daphne."

"I'm Mr. Black," Harry smiled. "It's nice to meet you."

"Did you say your name was Mr. Black?" Daphne's eyes widened.

"Yeah why?" Harry blinked.

"No reason," Daphne shrugged. "I'll get you a spade and set you to work."

"Thanks," Harry followed the woman down a hall.

"Here it is," the woman waved at a half dug room. "Just don't dig through this wall."

"What do you want me to do with the dirt?" Harry looked around.

"Just fill the buckets," Daphne smiled. "I'll have Henry take it out . . . can't let him get out of all the work can I?"

"I guess not," Harry smiled.

"Let me get you something to drink," Daphne smiled. "I can't let you do all this for nothing."

"Thank you," Harry picked up a spade and set to work.

Daphne returned with a pitcher of lemonade a few minutes later, "don't work too hard. Most new chums work too hard when they first start out and they get all sorts of problems from the heat or from not drinking enough water, I want you to stop and tell me if you start to feel sick or dizzy ok?"

"Ok," Harry took a sip. "Thank you."

"I'll be in the other room if you need anything," Daphne smiled. "You have fun."

"Thank you," Harry set his glass down. "I will."

Harry worked for a few more minutes before he heard the sound of broken glass. Reaching in, he found and pulled out a small clay covered stone.

"Well," Harry smiled as he examined the broken stone with a bluish glass center. "I guess I found my first opal . . . neat."

Harry continued to work and continued to find opals, after a few minutes a small pile formed in one corner of the room and Harry decided that he had spent enough time as an opal miner.

Selecting a few of the smaller stones for his friends and keeping the first stone for himself, Harry walked out of the room in search of his hostess.

"Done then?" Daphne smiled, "did you have any luck?"

"I found a few stones," Harry smiled as he pulled them out of his pocket. "This is the first one I found, it's neat isn't it?"

"Yes it is," Daphne nodded. "Congratulations, you can call yourself an opal . . . oh."

"What's wrong?" Harry's eyes widened in fear.

"I think the baby is coming," Daphne leaned back.

"You just relax," Harry pulled out his cell floo. "I'm going to call a doctor."

"Hurry," Daphne gave a strained smile. "Because I don't think this will wait."

"I will," Harry stepped out into the hall. "Professor can you hear me?"

"I hear you my friend," the Professor's voice answered. "We're right above your location, good timing I was just about to contact you."

"I need the Doctor to come down to my location right away," Harry forced himself to remain calm. "A woman is about to have a baby."

"We are on our way," the Professor's voice turned serious. "The Doctor says to go sit with her and that she will be down in a few minutes . . . Henchgirl says that she is coming too."

"Ok," Harry nodded. "Black out."

Harry rushed back into the room and sat next to Daphne.

"Well?" The woman's eyes focused on his face.

"The Doctor will be here in a few minutes," Harry bit his lower lip. "She told me to sit with you until she got here . . . um . . . breathe?"

"You haven't done this before have you," Daphne gave a short laugh.

"No," Harry shook his head. "Have you?"

"No," Daphne grabbed Harry's hand. "But I guess we can learn together."

"I guess," Harry glanced at the front door. "Where are they?"

"Right here," Henchgirl walked in. "Sorry it took so long but the Professor passed out."

"What?" Harry's brows came together.

"He was so excited that there was a baby on the way that he passed out," Henchgirl repeated. "He gets like that sometimes."

"Oh," Harry gave a slow nod. "Do either of you need me for anything or can I go tell the father?"

"Go tell the father," the Doctor opened her bag. "We'll take care of . . ."

"Daphne Blake," Harry answered.

"Daphne," the Doctor nodded.

"I'll be right back," Harry opened the door and ran down the hall to the bar.

"Back so soon?" The bartender looked up.

"Henry," Harry called out. "Your wife is having her baby now, I've got the Doctor and Henchgirl with her and I thought you might want to be there too."

"My baby's coming," Henry dropped his beer. "I gotta go."

"Congratulations mate," the bartender slapped the man on the back. "No get out of here."

Henry sprang from his chair and took off down the hall towards his house.

"Lucky bastard," the bartender smiled.

"Yeah," Harry reached into his pocket and slapped a wad of bills on the bar. "Drinks are on me till this runs out."

"Thanks mate," the bartender smiled. "Henry's a good man and we appreciate you doing this for him."

"I'm just not sure if I should stay here or go with him," Harry glanced at the door.

"Stay here," the bartender waved towards one of the chairs. "At least for a couple of rounds."

"Ok," Harry nodded. "If you insist."

The bar patrons cheered and beer flowed like water, toast after toast was raised towards Henry, his wife, and new child.

"I better get going," Harry rose after his fourth round. "I want to see how Daphne's doing."

"Give her our best mate," the bartender nodded.

"I will," Harry walked down the hall towards the Blake residence and knocked on the door.

"What do you want?" A strange woman answered the door with a frown.

"I just wanted to see how Henry and Daphne were doing," Harry smiled. "And to say hi to Henggirl and the Doctor."

"Who are you?" The woman's frown deepened.

"Mr. Black," Harry gave a nervous smile.

"Oh," the woman stepped back to allow entrance. "Sorry about that, but once the guys found out that Henggirl was visiting . . . well, you know."

"Um," Harry blinked. "No I don't . . . is everything ok?"

"Yeah," the woman pulled Harry in. "The baby was born and Daphne's been asking about you."

"About me?" Harry followed the woman down a short hall and to another door.

"Yeah," the woman nodded. "Go in."

"Ok," Harry entered the room to see Henggirl cooing over a small bundle while the Doctor supervised. Daphne being held in Henry's

embrace, and a half dozen jealous women waiting for their turn to hold the baby.

"Mr. Black," Daphne smiled when she noticed Harry's entrance. "There is something Henry and I wanted to talk with you about."

"Sure," Harry nodded.

"We wanted you to be our daughter's godfather," Henry smiled. "And I wanted you to know how much I appreciate the way you brought in the Doctor to look after my wife."

"No problem," Harry smiled. "It was the least I could do."

"So will you do it?" Daphne got to the heart of the matter, "there's no one we'd rather have as her godfather."

"Sure," Harry thought of Sirius. "I'd be honored."

"Excellent," Henry smiled.

"So what do I have to do?" Harry's smile widened.

"Nothing," Daphne shrugged. "We don't go much for ceremonies so you don't have to worry about that, we just wanted her to have a godfather and we couldn't think of a better person."

"Thanks," Harry glanced down at his watch. "And unfortunately it looks like we have to go . . . come on Henchgirl."

"Ok," Henchgirl gave the baby one last cuddle before handing her back to her mother.

"Let me walk you to the door," Henry smiled.

"Sure," Harry nodded as the group walked out of the room.

"I just wanted to tell you again how much I appreciate what you did for us," Henry clapped Harry on the shoulder. "And to let you know that if there is anything I can do for you . . . well, you just have to ask."

"Same here," Harry nodded. "If I can do anything to help I will . . . Henchgirl, make sure they have a way to contact us."

"I did," Henchgirl nodded.

"Before I forget," Henry laughed. "I have to know, did you find any opals."

"A few," Harry pulled them out of his pocket. "I kept a couple for souvenirs and left the rest in the room."

"Why didn't you keep them all?" Henry examined Harry's finds.

"I just wanted a few things to give to my friends," Harry handed an opal to Henchgirl and another to the Doctor. "And I wanted this one for myself since it was the first one I found . . . weren't many anyway."

"Well I'm glad you had enough luck to find something then," Henry smiled. "Come back anytime."

"I might," Harry nodded. "Aside from the spider attacks, I really like it here . . . good bye."

"Good bye mate," Henry shook all their hands before they stepped out into the hall. "And thanks again."

"Thanks for the opal," Henchgirl examined her gift.

"Yes thank you," the Doctor agreed.

"Don't worry about it," Harry blushed. "Professor . . . port us up."

IIIIIIII

"Nice fellas," Henry shook his head. "Leaving a few behind for me . . . no for my little girl."

"Are you going to go see what he left?" One of the women asked.

"Why not," Henry shrugged. "Can't be much . . . not after seeing what he took with him but it's more then I got now."

It wasn't easy, but Henry managed to walk to his daughter's unfinished bedroom to grab what Mr. Black had been generous enough to leave behind.

"Cor," His jaw dropped in shock. "Looks like my little girl's going through college . . . a dozen times if she wants to."

Henry gathered the opals in two large five gallon buckets and carried them into the bedroom to show his wife.

"I assume that there's a reason you brought those dirty buckets into my clean bedroom?" Daphne gave him a mock glare.

"Look at this," Henry's face was pale and his voice was horse. "Look what Mr. Black left behind for his goddaughter."

"Well," Daphne stared at the small fortune in her husband's hands. "I don't suppose he'd be willing to come back and be the godfather of our other children would he?"

"We don't have any other children," Henry blinked.

"We will hon," Daphne smiled. "Now that money isn't as much of a worry, I'm going want a bigger family so that the little one doesn't get lonely."

IIIIIIII

"So," Amelia took a sip of her tea. "How are things in your department these days?"

"Can't complain," her guest shrugged. "We've got plenty of mysteries to look into . . . enough to keep us busy anyway."

"I see," Amelia nodded. "I've been receiving some odd notes lately."

"Oh?" Her guest raised his eyebrow.

"From someone who says that he's a death eater that wants to defect," Amelia snagged a scone. "He says that he doesn't want to go free."

"So what does he want then?"

"He says that all he needs is a medium sized cage," Amelia took a bite out of her scone. "Preferably in a place with no demeters . . . but he's willing to compromise on that if need be."

"Oh? Odd that he doesn't care about the demeters," her guest grabbed a cookie from the tray. "Do you know the name of this death eater?"

"No," Amelia shook her head. "All I know is that he's afraid of Mr. Black and wants to be protected."

"Ah," Her guest gave a polite nod.

"So . . ." Amelia smiled, "has anything odd happened in your department?"

"Nothing much," her guest shrugged. "Business as usual and all that."

"I see . . ." Amelia kept her face impassive, "so I was wondering . . ."

"Yes?"

"Who does your department report to?" Amelia batted her eyelashes and smiled.

"Me," her guest smiled. "You know that Amelia."

"And who do you report to Grivner." Amelia gave him her best stare, the stare that had caused hardened death eaters to break down and confess their crimes, the stare that had Fudge break down and call for his mother in the last budget meeting.

"No one," Grivner blinked.

"Oh . . ."

"Why are you asking?"

"Well," Amelia sighed. "I've been trying to get information on Mr. Black."

"Ah," Grivner coughed a bit and held up the tea pot. "As far as I know, and I should know . . . he isn't connected with my department in any way. Can I refill your cup?"

"Sure," Amelia held up her cup and palmed the small card that appeared on her saucer . . . it looked like Grivner didn't think her office was secure enough for this conversation.

"We don't know much about Mr. Black," Grivner put the pot down. "No known affiliations, wealthy, good knowledge of spells . . . nothing definite though."

"So you've got the same information I do," Amelia exhaled. "I suppose it can't be helped."

"I will let you know if I find anything," Grivner smiled. "Or if I hear any more interesting rumors."

"I appreciate that," Amelia smiled. "And I'll see you tomorrow for our afternoon tea."

"Goodbye Amelia," Grivner left the room and Amelia allowed herself to glance down at the card he'd given her.

Two hours later, Amelia followed the directions printed on the card to a rather . . . unusual location.

"Glad you could come," Grivner led Amelia into a small room with two seats and a table. "There are some things we need to discuss."

"What is this place?" Amelia looked around at the barren walls.

"One moment please," Grivner locked the door and took a seat in the chair facing Amelia.

"Wha . . ." Amelia froze as two large cylinders lowered onto her and Grivner's chairs. "What is all this?"

"We are sitting in what is probably the most warded room in England," Grivner smiled. "And the device that was lowered onto us

is based on a device invented by one of our muggle counterparts in America."

"What is it?" Amelia couldn't believe the lengths that the Head Unspeakable was going to.

"It's called the Cone of Silence," Grivner smiled. "But I believe I called you down here to talk about Mr. Black . . . he's a very interesting fellow."

"What can you tell me?" Amelia was all business.

"First of all," Grivner smiled. "I'd like to know why you thought he might be my superior?"

"It's part of the information I was given by the Lovegoods," Amelia replied.

"Ah the Lovegoods," Grivner nodded. "That's another mystery, the man knows virtually everything that happens in the Department of Mysteries and to my knowledge, he's never so much as set foot in our wing of the Ministry. A few months ago I dropped a cabinet on my foot in my private office and no one was around . . . the next day I got a get well card signed by the Lovegood family . . . young Luna admonished me to be more careful next time."

"I assume that you've checked your office for bugs?" Amelia blinked.

"Checked and rechecked," Grivner sighed. "By different groups of people every time . . . nothing has ever been found."

"Oh," Amelia blinked again. "I guess that's more evidence for my theory that they're working for Mr. Black."

"I hadn't thought of that," Grivner rubbed his chin. "It does explain quite a bit . . . and I do admit that we do have evidence that there is another department, maybe not in our government . . . or any government but . . . there are just too many coincidences to dismiss, too many inconvenient people die in accidents. The cabinet that crushed my foot prevented me from running into a death eater ambush

and since then I've been wondering about some other strange occurrences. "

"I became an Auror because the desk sergeant offered to tear up a citation for underage magic use if I'd sit through the exam," Amelia was stunned by the revelation. "And I only got caught because there happened to be another Auror walking down my street that day and she saw through my clumsy anti detection wards."

"An odd feeling isn't it?" Grivner looked around, "to think that someone is pulling our strings."

"What can you tell me about Mr. Black?" Ameila leaned forward as far as the device would allow her.

"He's a Baron in Transylvania, he's extremely wealthy, he has knowledge and books so rare that they might as well be legend." Grivner smiled, "he has poisonous blood and can cast undetectable spells. We believe that he kills an average of four to ten dark wizards or creatures a day and we believe that he is at least thirteen thousand years old."

"What?" Amelia went bug eyed, "how can you be sure."

"It's just a guess based on the evidence we've been able to collect," Grivner smiled. "While in Egypt, he 'discovered' several tombs, tombs hidden so well that they'd gone unnoticed for centuries and he did that on his way to a valley that had been hidden and warded by the greatest mages in the old kingdoms. Several of these tombs spoke of the dark one, the destroyer. A being of unspeakable horror that laid waste to the lands of the kingdom, and may have been responsible for the sinking of Atlantis. Mr. Black mentioned that he was in the area to recover a book that we believe was a diary written by Merlin. Mr. Black also mentioned that Merlin was thrown out of Atlantis for being too weak and later referred to the great mage as a 'snot nosed kid.'"

"My god," Amelia blinked. "What happens if he decides to turn his attention to us? I thought that we were living in dark times now but . . ."

"It doesn't look like that is a worry," Grivner smiled in relief. "Information suggests that he is either retired or redeemed, one of my men has advanced the theory that Black may not have been a dark lord so much as a freedom fighter . . . his well known hatred for death eaters and any sort of blood purists combined with the fact that we don't know much of anything about the society in ancient Atlants means that the government could have been something along the lines of what will happen if Tom Riddle wins."

"History is written by the winner," Amelia agreed. "Wait . . . didn't you say that Merlin was thrown out of Atlantis for his lack of power?"

"It fits," Grivner's eyes lit up. "If they were willing to exile a wizard for 'low' power then imagine what they would have done to a squib . . . or a muggle."

"And following your theory," Amelia gave a slow nod. "They did it to the wrong person and angered Mr. Black."

"Who destroyed their civilization in retaliation," Grivner's eyes widened. "I . . . gods, think what would have happened to us if Fudge's insane plan had annoyed Mr. Black . . . or worse if they had accidentally harmed one of Black's friends."

Amelia froze, "I don't think we'd be having this conversation if they had mad a mistake like that."

"I don't know if anyone in England would be having any conversations if something like that happened," Grivner shuddered.

AN: Thanks go to Chris Hill for the idea of doing a scene with Grivner and Bones and for most of the details, good job and it gave me a great place to put a few points about Mr. Black's past that I needed a home for.

Surprise

"Welcome back," the Professor smiled. "I trust you had a good time . . . how's the child."

"We had a good time," Harry nodded. "And the child is fine, they even made me her godfather."

"Congratulations," the Professor smiled. "If you don't mind, I was hoping to make a quick stop on the island so that you can put up a few wards and after that . . . well, you see it's like this . . . Henchgirl?"

"The Professor and I have a conference we'd like to attend in America," Henchgirl spoke up. "So we'll have to hurry if we want to get there on time."

"So we won't be able to make many stops between here and the United States," the Professor smiled nervously.

"Ok," Harry nodded. "I have to be in England in a few days so I don't mind us hurrying a bit . . . when do you have to be in the United States?"

"I was hoping to be there in the next twenty four hours," the Professor shrugged. "It's not a very long conference . . . at least not the part we're interested in."

"Sure," Harry nodded. "Will we be able to make it to England in the next few days?"

"Certainly," the Professor nodded. "Why?"

"Because there's something in Sweden that I'd like to do in three days and I have to be back in England for something long term after that," Harry shrugged. "Sorry to spring this on you."

"Quite alright," the Professor waved it off. "Henchgirl . . . full speed ahead."

"Why are you telling me that," Henchgirl glared. "You're the one hogging the controls again."

"Silence wench," the Professor screamed. "When I say all ahead full or full speed ahead or any sort of nautical term, you say aye aye Captain."

"No," Henchgirl turned up her nose.

"You will do as I say," the Professor walked up to Henchgirl and glared up at her.

"Make me," Henchgirl glared down.

"Alright I will," the Professor nodded. "Mr. Black, let me borrow your personal defence device."

"I'm staying out of this," Harry began backing away from his two squabbling friends.

"Give it to him," Henchgirl shrugged. "Little shrimp's gonna need all the help he can get."

"Bye now," Harry walked out of the room as fast as he could.

Henchgirl walked over to the door and stuck her head out, "he's gone."

"Excellent," the Professor nodded. "Now it's time to discuss that thing that we do not wish him to know that we are discussing because it would ruin the surprise."

"He's not here," Henchgirl blinked. "So you don't have to be evasive."

"Oh," the Professor blinked. "Right."

IIIIIIII

"The odd couple asked me to come down here and tell you that we've arrived on the island," the Doctor stuck her head through Harry's doorway.

"Thanks," Harry yawned. "I'll be right out."

"Been busy?" The Doctor glanced around the small cabin, paying particular attention to the piles of books and scrolls.

"Yeah," Harry nodded. "I've been researching every ward I could find, some of the Egyptian ones are really nasty."

"Gonna put them up?" The Doctor raised her eyebrow.

"I'm thinking about it," Harry nodded. "Depends on if I can find a way to make all the wards work together."

"Good luck then," the Doctor shrugged. This wasn't really her area of expertise.

"Thanks," Harry put on his jacket. "Let's go."

"Right behind you," the Doctor smirked.

Harry walked out of his room and into the Professor, "I see that the Doctor told you that we've arrived."

"Yes," Harry nodded. "I've also been doing some research on wards, I think I've figured out a way to get all of these to work together."

"Let me see that please," the Professor held out his hand. "Yes . . . it looks like you've been able to work everything out."

"Will it work with the wards that you've been developing?" Harry blinked, "or the wards that the Architect is or has put up?"

"They should work . . ." The Professor squinted at Harry's notes, "give me a minute."

"Alright," Harry watched as the Professor made several additional notes.

"Henchgirl, take a look at this." The Professor bellowed.

"Not so loud," Henchgirl glared. "I'm standing right here."

"Take a look at this," the Professor handed Henggirl the notes. "Tell me what you think."

"They should work," Henggirl gave a slow nod. "I'd like to get the Architect's opinion before we start everything though."

"I'd appreciate that," Harry nodded. "I'm always happy to get a second, third, or even fifteenth opinion."

"Do you mind if I add a few . . . of my family's wards?" The Doctor cut in, "I'm also going to want to add a few things to the Hospital."

"Consult with the Architect," the Professor suggested. "He's the expert with wards . . . you might also want to look over his hospital designs."

"Thanks," the Doctor nodded. "I'll do that."

"This way," the Professor gestured. "The Architect put in a dock for the Zeppelin so we won't be porting down."

"Cool," Harry shrugged.

The group walked towards the nose of the Zeppelin and emerged on a large raised stone platform.

"Glad you could make it," the Architect smiled. "We've just finished the foundation and we're ready to lay the corner stone."

"Great," Harry nodded. "I assume we're going to tie the wards to the cornerstone?"

"Yes," the Architect nodded. "The first few layers anyway. There are several fingers of rock jutting out of the ocean around the island. My current plan is to erect several towers on these fingers of rock to extend the reach of the wards and to put in a few more layers."

"Sounds good," Harry nodded. "Could you take a look at these notes? I think we've managed to get all these wards to work together but I'd still appreciate your opinion."

"Let me look at that," the Architect nodded. "Do you mind if I make a few changes?"

"Please," Harry nodded.

"All of these will work with the Goblin wards that I'm planning to erect," the Architect made a few notes. "But I think you can tighten them up if you make these changes, it also closes a small gap you left here."

"I see," Harry nodded. "Thanks . . . when do we start?"

"To make things as effective as possible, you're going to have to start casting the second the stone falls into its final position and you won't be able to stop until all these wards are placed."

"I'm not sure I have that much energy," Harry admitted with a frown. "I'll do my best but . . ."

"We've already taken care of that," the Doctor smiled. "Over the past two weeks, Henchgirl and I have been brewing a few potions to take care of that little problem . . . the minus side of that is that you won't be able to cast more than the most basic spells for about a day after the casting."

"That's fine," Harry took a breath. "Show us the way."

"I'll give you the tour," the Architect smiled. "To start with, this is not the Zeppelin's permanent berth. We've incorporated a dock in the main building's final design."

"Excellent," the Professor nodded.

"This way," the Architect led the group down a narrow path. "To our left is some temporary housing for the workers and for the people you've sent us."

"What people?" Harry raised an eyebrow.

"Several Yuki Onna," the Architect smiled. "They're a god send, without them we wouldn't have had a chance to get so far along."

They've managed to keep the worst storms away, with them around there is no chance that we'll miss a day because of the weather."

"I'm glad they're working out," Harry nodded. "So they're happy here?"

"Oh yes," the Architect nodded. "Tremendously happy."

"Good," Harry smiled. "I'm glad."

"And here we come to the building site," the Architect smiled.

"Wow," Harry stared down at the large pit. "Why did you dig so deep?"

"I wanted to put in a few underground levels," the Architect replied proudly. "And I guess I got carried away, eventually I hope to have tunnels and vaults under every square inch of this island . . . it's enough to keep me busy for years."

"Great," Harry shrugged. "Where's the cornerstone?"

"That's it right behind you," the Architect's grin nearly split his face."

"That is the cornerstone?" Harry's eyes widened as he took in the fifty ton rectangular rock, "It's bigger then the house I grew up in."

"Megalithic construction is the only way to go," the Architect smirked. "When it's finished you wont be able to fit a razer blade through the seams. It is more difficult then normal methods but it will last forever and it's much stronger."

"How are you going to get it in place?" Harry couldn't believe it was possible to build anything with things that big.

"It's already been heavily enchanted to allow me to do this myself," the Architect smiled. "It took three teams of goblins two weeks to get it right . . . construction will speed up after this when I bring in the machinery and allow the construction teams to do their jobs."

"Why didn't you have them help you with this?" Harry couldn't tear his eyes away from the giant stone.

"It's traditional for the builder to set the first stone," the Architect shrugged. "Who knows if that tradition is there for a reason . . . better safe than sorry."

"And it gives you a bit of the glory right off," Harry smiled. "Ok . . . let's do this."

"Alright," the Architect began chanting under his breath in an unrecognisable language.

"It's moving," Henghgirl cried out.

A line of sweat made its way down the Architect's forehead as the massive stone took flight, "be ready . . . I can't hold this up much longer."

"I'm ready," Harry drew his wand.

Harry began casting the second the giant stone made contact with the ground, for hours he kept up the pace allowing himself only enough time to down one of the Doctor's potions every time his reserves began to get too low.

Rivers of sweat pored down Harry's face and neck as he cast wards that hadn't been used in generations in dead languages that hadn't touched a human tongue in just as long.

"He's starting to tire," the Doctor cried out. "Watch him."

"He's almost done," the Professor checked the notes. "Just one more layer to add."

"Klap tu verada," Harry's voice was horse as the last ward snapped into place. "I'm done, how do they look?"

"Magnificent," the Architect smiled. "Alone they would withstand an assault more powerful than had been seen on this world, when we finish adding the goblin charms . . . they'll be impenetrable."

"Try not to let anyone hear that," Harry felt faint. "Unsinkable ships tend to come to a bad end."

"As you say," the Architect nodded. "I'm afraid that we haven't been entirely honest with you when we told you that we brought you here to complete the wards."

"Oh?" Harry raised an eyebrow.

"Yes," the Architect nodded. "We had another, more . . . sinister reason to bring you here today."

"It was all Henggirl's idea," the Professor smirked evilly.

"Happy Birthday," Henggirl screamed.

"What?" Harry blinked.

"Happy Birthday," Henggirl repeated herself. "Oyuki will be here with the cake in a few minutes."

"I hate to say it," Harry gave a sheepish smile. "But my birthday was about a month ago."

"And we didn't have a party," Henggirl nodded. "So we're having one now, it's more of a surprise that way."

"Oh," Harry scratched his chin. "I guess that makes sense."

"How do you normally spend your birthday?" Henggirl was bouncing with excitement.

"Well," Harry sighed. "I usually spend it alone, in the past few years I've had a few letters."

"You've never had a party?" Henggirl's lip started to quiver.

"I've had a party," Harry smiled. "It was great."

"Just one?" Henggirl's eyes started watering.

"I had two . . . sort of," Harry frowned. "Does it count as a party if there's only one other person that doesn't hate your guts . . . oh, and there was some cake too."

"You're having a party every year from now on," Henggirl's hands balled up into fists and she thrust them in her pockets. "Here with us . . . ok?"

"Ok," Harry nodded.

"I got the cake," Oyuki smiled.

"I'll transfigure some chairs and a table," the Professor volunteered.

"I'll . . ." Harry blanched at Henggirl's glare. "Just stand around and enjoy my birthday?"

"That's right," Henggirl nodded. "What kind of cake is that Oyuki?"

"It's a Baked Alaska," Oyuki smiled. "What else?"

So this is what it's like to have a family, Harry mused to himself as he ate his portion of cake.

"Have you given any thought of what you're going to do with your Nundu?" The Doctor smiled across the table.

"No," Harry shook his head. "Why?"

"I was hoping that you'd be willing to leave it here," the Doctor smiled. "I've decided to stay so I can personally oversee the construction of my Hospital and I'd like to keep the Nundu around so I can continue my research."

"Is there a place to keep it around here?" Harry looked around.

"I had the workers construct something temporary while you were putting the wards up," the Architect nodded.

"Temporary in the sense that it'll only last a few hundred years," Oyuki giggled. "The houses he put up to house us are quite shoddy,

a few good hurricanes and a dozen earthquakes and they'd fall to the ground."

"I told you that you'll be getting more permanent quarters in the fortress when I have that built," the Architect grouched. "You only need to wait a few months."

"I'm just playing with you," Oyuki smiled. "Anyone else would have considered what we have to be good enough."

"Oh," the Architect turned back to his cake.

"What do you need to do in America?" Harry turned towards the Professor and Henchgirl.

"We have a convention we'd like to attend," the Professor smiled.

"It shows all the newest advancements in Magical Law Enforcement and Military spells and equipment," Henchgirl smiled.

"Not to mention the strong civilian contingent," the Professor nodded. "The Americans are much more interested in dueling and lethal spells than most other groups of people."

"We're presenting a few things," Henchgirl smiled.

"Would you mind speaking a few words of introduction before we present?" The Professor smiled hopefully.

"Sure," Harry shrugged. "If you think it would help."

AN: Harry missed his birthday by about a month ago story time, he missed it. I wouldn't think he'd pay too much attention to it without his friends around and since he'd spent his entire life without really celebrating it. The Return to England is coming up, stay tuned.

Trip to Sin City

"Hey Bruce," a man walked into the office of the Head of Australian Law Enforcement. "Got some news for you."

"What is it Bruce?" The Chief raised an eyebrow.

"Turns out that Mr. Black was here," Bruce scratched his chin. "Got into a fist fight with a roo and won."

"Anything else?" The Chief yawned.

"Found a few mil in opals," Bruce shrugged. "And the bushmen have been seeing dingos chewing on some strange white masks around the area that Mr. Black was thought to have been."

"Right, no worries." The chief shrugged, "let's go get a beer."

"Good idea," Bruce nodded. "I'll ask Bruce and Bruce if they can come along, I think Bruce might be off too."

"See if Bruce is out of the hospital," the Chief nodded. "Might as well have the whole department come along."

IIIIIIII

"We're here," Henggirl stuck her head through Harry's door.

"How'd you do that?" Harry blinked.

"It's a new spell I'm working on," Henggirl smiled. "Think how fun and useful it will be to be able to walk through walls."

"I guess," Harry put down his book and put on his coat. "Let's go."

"Ok," Henggirl pulled her head out of the door to allow Harry to exit his room.

"What's all this?" Harry walked out of his room and into a pile of luggage.

"We're showing a lot of things at the convention," Henghgirl smiled.

"Cool," Harry nodded. "Sounds intersetting."

"You've already seen it all," Henghgirl grinned.

"Do you need my help to carry it all?" Harry looked around.

"No need," Henghgirl shook her head. "We're testing out a new delivery system so we don't have to carry any of this down . . . and we hope to sell most of it so we don't have to carry it back up."

"Well," the Professor was getting a bit annoyed at being ignored. "Let's all get down then."

"Don't we need to leave someone behind to raise and lower the wards?" Harry smiled.

"We fixed that," Henghgirl smiled. "Now your cell floo sends up an encrypted signal that trips the wards and allows us to pass."

"Cool," Harry shrugged. "Let's go."

The three friends appeared in the lobby of a casino in front of a large bank of slot machines.

"Hold on a sec," Harry smiled. "I want to try this."

"You do know that the odds of winning are slim to nil?" The Professor smiled.

"Yup," Harry gave a cheerful nod.

"Ok then," the Professor shrugged.

Harry walked up to one of the machines and slipped a coin into the slot. The machine clicked whirred and blinked and then sirens went off and lights began blinking.

"Congratulations sir," one of the casino employees walked up. "You've just won our motorcycle in our motorcycle slot madness."

"That's nice," Harry smiled. "Is it ok if I try this again?"

"Whatever you like sir," the man nodded.

Harry placed another coin in the slot and pulled the handle, the machine lit up and sirens began sounding . . . again.

"What the hell?" Harry's eyes narrowed.

"Congratulations again sir," the casino employee smiled. "I've never seen a person make two big wins in a row on the slots."

"It was supposed to go click whirr and take my money," Harry frowned. "That's the experience I wanted, why the hell won't it do that?"

"Just lucky I guess," the casino employee had dealt with people stranger than this and kept his composure. "Perhaps if you try again?"

"One more time," Harry nodded placing another coin in the machine and pulling the arm. "Finally," Harry smiled. "I thought it would take forever to lose."

"Yes sir," the employee nodded. "What would you like me to do with your winnings?"

"Can we play with the motorcycle?" Henchgirl perked up. "I've got some ideas to . . . improve it."

"Sure whatever," Harry shrugged. "I'm gonna want to ride it later though . . . make sure it can fly."

"Ok," Henchgirl nodded.

"And the money?" The employee asked quickly.

Harry sighed, "the Professor can give you the number of my bank account . . . still don't know how he got it but he'll give it to you."

"Right," the employee nodded. "Then enjoy your stay with us."

"Thanks," Harry nodded. "I guess I'll be in the convention if anyone needs me."

"I'm coming too," Henchgirl nodded. "Let the Professor deal with the money problems."

"And Happy to do it," the Professor smiled.

Henchgirl and Harry wandered towards the defence convention and the casino employee turned to the Professor. "May I ask why he was disappointed that he won twice in a row?"

"He just wanted a normal gambling experience," the Professor smiled. "Who wins at slots?"

"I . . . see," the employee blinked. "Who do I put down as the winner?"

"Mr. Black," the Professor grinned. "I'll give you the information needed to deposit it into his account in just a minute."

"Ah," the employee nodded . . . that explained everything.

|||||

"The master has ordered us to go after Black again," Wormtail sagged. "He says that if we stop trying to kill Black we'll be seen as weak."

The assorted death eaters shared worried glances and several made plans to turn themselves in.

"You three," Peter gave a disinterested wave. "Come with me."

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Harry and Henchgirl spent several minutes looking through the assorted booths and networking before it all became a bit tedious.

"I'm going to go get something to drink," Harry smiled. "Want to come?"

"Sure," Henchgirl nodded. "Let's go."

Harry and Henchgirl made their way to one of the casino's bars and Harry ordered himself a drink.

"And for you?" The bartender turned to Henchgirl.

"Give me a soda water," Henchgirl nodded. "And a teaspoon of salt, half a table spoon of brown sugar, a shot glass full of lime juice, and three grams of lemon zest."

"Right away," the confused bartender wandered off to procure Henchgirl's order.

"I prefer to make my own drinks," Henchgirl shrugged. "They taste better than anything he could make."

"Well," Harry blinked. "You are a potions mistress."

"That's right," Henchgirl nodded. "I am . . . do you have any plans for the convention?"

"I was just planning to wander around and see what I could see," Harry smiled. "Maybe check out one of the other conventions in the hotel."

"Sounds like fun," Henchgirl nodded. "There are some interesting conventions in the casino and I'm sure there are a few parties to go to."

"Here you are," the bartender brought over a large tray covered in Henchgirl's orders. "And it's on the house if you'll allow me to watch you make . . . whatever it is you're going to make."

"Ok," Henchgirl nodded. "But don't steal my recipe, I'd be happy to sell it to the casino but I don't want it used without my permission."

"Of course not," the bartender nodded. "I just had to know what you were going to do."

"Ok," Henchgirl spend several minutes mixing her drink. "And you end up with a citrus soda that's much better than anything on the market."

"Wonderful," the bartender nodded. "I think I might be able to convince my boss to buy this from you, what was your name again?"

"Henchgirl," Henchgirl smiled.

"I definitely think I can convince my boss to buy this then," the bartender's smile widened. "The marketing aspect alone is astronomical."

"Ok," Henchgirl smiled. "Do you want a sip Mr. Black?"

"Sure," Harry shrugged. Grabbing the glass, Harry took a short sip. "It's good, thanks for letting me try it."

"No problem," Henchgirl smiled.

"Hmm," Harry glanced in the mirror. "We might want to get back to the convention."

"Why?" Henchgirl blinked.

"Because I think I recognise one of the people at that table," Harry smirked. "And I want to mess with his head . . . might be best if we leave the bar after I set things into motion."

"Ok," Henchgirl nodded.

Harry raised a finger to signal the bar tender.

"Yes sir?" The bar tender asked politely.

"Is that 'Mad Eye' Moody at that table over there?" Harry asked with a grin.

"I believe it is sir, why do you ask?"

“Just wanted to make sure,” Harry gave a sadistic grin and tossed a bag of coins on the table. “Buy the table a round of drinks and give Moody a message from me would you?”

“Of course sir,” the bartender made the bag disappear. “And who may I say the message is from?”

Harry gave an evil grin, “Mr. Black.”

“I understand sir.” The bartender nodded, “what was the message you wanted to send?”

IIIIIIII

“And get this,” the Italian drained half his glass. “He was carrying a dagger that was over two thousand years old, 's no wonder he spotted all our tails. We were following the man that taught Flamel how to make his bloody stone.”

“S' nothing,” one of the Japanese shook his head. “I saw Black . . .”

“I'm sorry to interrupt you gentlemen,” the bartender placed a tray with several glasses and one bottle on the table. “But someone has bought you all a round of drinks.”

“Who?” Moody (and half the table) eyed the bartender suspiciously.

“Look at the label on the bottle.”

Moody squinted at the offending object and began to read aloud, “Johnny Walker Black.”

“He also wanted me to give you a message sir.”

“What's that,” Moody's eye was spinning as he attempted to find one of the most feared man in the world.

“Constant Vigilance.”

IIIIIIII

Harry and Henchgirl giggled as they walked out of the bar, imagining the expression on Moody's face when he got the message.

"Sorry to interrupt," a man walked up with a smile. "But you wouldn't happen to be Mr. Black and Henchgirl would you?"

"Yes why?" Harry nodded.

"Because you're scheduled to speak in about three minutes," the man waved Harry towards a raised platform with a podium.

"What do you want me to say?" Harry asked nervously as he followed the man to the stage.

"Just tell them what your favorite spell is and why," the man shrugged. "And then step off the stage so that the Professor and Henchgirl can present their products."

"I can do that," Harry nodded.

"Then do it," the man smiled.

"And now on behalf of Black Ink, we have Mr. Black who will give us a few words before we bring out his colleagues." The man gave Harry a short introduction.

Harry walked up to the podium and cleared his throat.

"In my opinion," Harry began. "The purpose of Law Enforcement is to defend the public from every dangerous and psychotic idiot that would do them harm. My favorite spell for this is . . ."

A group of death eaters appearing on the raised platform next to Harry caused him to lose his train of thought.

The thousands of Magical Law Enforcement, Military, Defence Contractors, and armed civilians watching Harry's speech blinked in surprise.

"Prepare to die," one of the dumber death eaters threatened.

"These are those idiots that I've been telling you about," Harry couldn't believe what was happening. "Notice the dark robes and white masks."

"Flee before the might of the dark lord," another dim death eater tried.

"I didn't call them here," Harry looked around the room. "Is this anyone else's demonstration?"

The convention goers eyed each other and drew their wands.

"Well . . ." Harry looked around, "I guess the only thing to say here is fire when ready."

The room lit up as nearly every spell known to wizard kind was flung at the death eaters, their hastily erected shields might as well have been made out of tissue paper for all the good they did. The death eaters all expired within the first minute of what would end up being twenty minutes of constant spells.

"Well . . ." Harry's eyes focused on a small rat limping off the stage. "Wormtail," in a flash Harry's scythe was in his hand.

Peter screamed as his death loomed closer and closer. At the last minute, Peter managed to activate his portkey and escape.

"Damn," Harry sighed. "He's always getting away from me . . . sorry about that folks." The assorted convention goers stared at Harry's scythe in shock, "as I was saying . . . I've found the most useful spell for every day dueling to be the Reductor curse. It is easy and quick to cast, it is legal in every country, and it will put a man down quickly. Not many people can move with a large chunk missing from their chest . . . thank you."

The audience applauded enthusiastically and Harry took a bow before he stepped off the stage.

"With the tough job of following Mr. Black's rather . . . impressive performance," the announcer paused to let the laughter die down. "Is the Professor and Henchgirl, the head Researcher and head Potions Mistress of Black Ink."

IIIIIIII

Seconds after Harry left the stage, dozens of operatives for dozens of agencies rushed to find semi private locations to make their reports.

"This is secret agent eighty six calling control, come in control." A man whispered into his cell floo.

"This is headquarters," a female voice replied. "And I've told you to stop reporting in like that . . . it stopped being funny after the third time."

"Still amuses me so I'm still going to use it," the Man smirked.

"What was so important that you ducked out early to report it?" The woman's voice sounded board.

"Our information that Mr. Black would speak was correct," the man whispered. "And our speculation that he'd provide a bit of entertainment was also correct . . . I've never seen so many spells cast at once."

"I'm still failing to understand what was so important that you had to report in now?" The female voice was starting to sound annoyed.

"After the battle, Mr. Black focused on a small rat and attempted to kill it with a large scythe," the man's tone turned smug. "The rat escaped by activating a portkey. Mr. Black then apologized and mentioned that he'd been after that rat for quite some time and that it was always getting away. It is pure speculation on my part but I know of only one figure that is said to use a scythe to reap his victims."

"I see," the female voice paused. "Return to the convention and report any other items of interest . . . you also have permission to buy anything you desire from Mr. Black's company . . . control out."

"I knew I'd be able to get her to do that if I kept pestering her," the man gave a satisfied grin. "I'll be placing myself in terrible danger if I continue my attempts to get her to make more references like that . . . and loving it, heh."

AN: The Bruce thing is from an old skit, if you know it cool.

High Noon

Harry spent a few more minutes wandering around the defence show before it all got tedious and he decided to see what else the hotel had to offer.

Upon wandering out of the massive convention hall, the first thing he saw was several people dressed in outdated costumes . . . costumes much more detailed than those worn by the average pureblood.

"Excuse me," Harry walked up to a girl in a colorful saloon girl outfit.

"Yes?" The woman twirled her parasol, "what can I do for you?"

"Um," Harry focused on the woman's face. "I don't mean to be rude but . . . well, why is everyone dressed like it was a hundred years ago?"

"We're part of the Single Action Shooting Society," the woman patted Harry on the cheek. "Magical branch . . . it's better known as cowboy action shooting."

"So you all dress up like cowboys and have fun?" Harry perked up.

"Yes," the woman nodded. "I guess that's one way of looking at it."

"Can I play too?" Harry's eyes lit up, "it sounds like fun and I have a couple hours to kill."

"Sure," the woman nodded. "Come on."

Harry followed the woman down a hall and to a large set of double doors.

"The casino set up a portal to a small town in Colorado," the woman smiled. "It's one of those enclaves that hasn't changed much in the last hundred or so years."

"One of those enclaves?" Harry followed the woman through the door and his jaw dropped in shock. In front of him was a town that wouldn't have been out of place in the old west. "There are more of these?"

"Quite a few," the woman nodded. "Scattered around the western states, most of the inhabitants are magical but there are a few that . . . well you just can't tell. There are even rumors that some of the tribes withdrew to some hidden valley or patch of forest and warded the area so heavily that no one will ever find them."

"Wow," Harry looked around.

"Most of us enjoy access to modern amenities so we'll only do this sort of thing on weekends and conventions like this . . . then we go home, but for some it's their life." The woman smiled over at Harry, "don't worry about your appearance . . . you can buy a period outfit later if you decide you like this sort of thing."

"My outfit," Harry looked down and watched his clothes change into something more appropriate. "Won't be a problem."

"Nice trick," the woman smiled. "Now all you need is a hat . . . there are plenty of vendors around if you want something."

"Thanks," Harry smiled. "I'm gonna go explore . . . see you later."

"Have fun," the woman waved.

Harry walked up and down the dusty street a few times before finally wandering into the town's small general store.

"Can I help ya?" A grizzled old man standing behind the counter peered out.

"I need a hat," Harry smiled. "Can I buy one here?"

"Shore can," the old man nodded. "And anything else you need."

"What do you need to do what everyone else is doing?" Harry scratched his chin.

"A pistol would be all you need to start with," the grizzled old man shrugged. "I don't have much contact with them, they roll into town a couple times a year and then they roll out and things get peaceful again."

"Oh," Harry nodded. "What kind of pistol should I get?"

"Colt Single Action Army always feels good in the hand," the old man smiled. "A Smith and Wesson Schofield or Russian could also be a good choice."

"Ok," Harry licked his lips. "What do you recommend?"

"I always thought a Single Action Army had the best feel," the old man shrugged. "And it is the gun most people think of when they think of a cowboy gun."

"I'll get that then," Harry nodded.

"What calibre do you want it in?" The old man smirked.

"Calibre?" Harry scratched his chin.

"It's a way of measuring the diameter of a bullet," the old man grinned. "For example, in theory fifty calibre would be about half an inch."

"Oh," Harry gave a slow nod. "What do you suggest?"

"Well," the old man pulled a few bullets out from under the counter. "I'd pick one of these three, the first one is a forty five caliber, sometimes called a forty five long used to be the Army's pistol caliber and it still has a following. The second is a forty four forty, that means that it is a forty four caliber bullet over forty grains of black powder. It's basically a forty five case necked down to forty four caliber, see the way the case tapers down?"

"Yeah," Harry nodded. "What's the third one?"

"The third one is a thirty eight forty," the old man smirked. "Can you tell me what that means?"

"Thirty eight caliber over forty grains of black powder?" Harry shrugged.

"Yep," the old man nodded. "The thing you got to remember is that caliber isn't always correct, they'll sometimes fudge the numbers a bit to make a round number. For example, the thirty eight forty's bullets have a diameter of point four oh one and the forty four forty has a diameter of point four two seven."

"So what do you think I should get?" Harry scratched his chin.

"Depends on what you want to do with it," the old shopkeep scratched his chin. "If you want to compete then all of them would work good, if you want to pair it with a rifle then I'd recommend either the thirty eight forty or the forty four forty because of the taper. If you want to do anything else with it then I'd recommend the forty five long, because the ammunition is much more available these days."

"I'll take the forty five long then," Harry sighed. "I'd like to say that I'll just compete with this thing but my life isn't that lucky."

"I see," the old man reached behind the counter. "Take this then, it's basically an old Single Action Army but it's got a few improvements."

"Like what?" Harry regarded the pistol with more than a bit of interest.

"Replacing flat springs with coil springs, the ability to load all six rounds safely." The old man shrugged, "that sort of thing."

"Ok," Harry nodded. "Do I need anything else?"

"A holster," the man nodded. "And a belt, I'd recommend a threepersons on a good belt."

"And I suppose you," Harry had played this game a thousand times.

"Just happen to have one," the old man nodded. "And a few others designs if you want one of them."

"I don't know enough to have an opinion," Harry shrugged. "Could you show me how to shoot?"

"I can," the old shopkeep nodded. "I'd recommend that you hand this off to a good gunsmith before you use it though."

"Why?" Harry blinked, "isn't it ready to go now?"

"It is," the old man nodded. "And I'm sure it'll do good, doesn't hurt to have a gunsmith look it over. Something you should always do before you shoot a used gun."

"Ok," Harry yawned. "Do you know a good gunsmith?"

"One of the prospectors that drifts in and out of town is a gunsmith," the shopkeeper nodded. "You'll find him sitting out front next to the wooden Indian."

Harry walked out and found a man with a beat up old hat sitting on a bench in front of the store.

"Excuse me?" Harry nodded.

"Y'all here bout the mine?" Two eyes squinted out from under the brim of the hat.

"I was hoping you could look over my new pistol," Harry shrugged. "They told me you were a gunsmith."

"And a miner," the man nodded. "When ya need it?"

"Later today," Harry shrugged. "I wanted to try my hand at competing in the contest."

"Not much time to work then," the man frowned. "But I suppose I have time to smooth the action and lap the barrels."

"Um," Harry didn't have a clue what the man was talking about. "I also have to have a few hours to learn ta shoot."

"Borrow another gun while I work then," the man spat at a dust devil.

"Ok," Harry nodded. "I think I can do that . . . what were you saying about a mine?"

"There's two," the man held up a gloved finger. "The first is mine, and I ain't sellin'."

"And the second?" Harry blinked.

"Second's been lost for years," the man shrugged. "And you won't find it less one of them wants ya to."

"Ok," Harry nodded. "Why did you think I wanted to talk about a mine?"

"Cause some no good sidewindin yella belly'd galoot's been trying ta take mah mine," the man spat again. "And I ah ain't gonna give it ta him . . . thought you might 'ha been one of his men. Sorry bout that."

"No problem," Harry shrugged. "Anyway I can help . . . Mr?"

"Ed, and no . . . not less you have the power to drive off a developer." Ed shrugged, "lousy bastard wants ta put a sky resort on my property and turn this town into another cess pool of eastern money."

"I might be able to help with that," Harry nodded. "Know anyone that can send a message to this guy?"

"Yeah, I know someone that'll get a message to that no good yella belly . . . don't know that it'll do any good."

"Who?" Harry smiled.

"Feller in the saloon named Blinks," Ed spat again. "He's the dumb ugly one . . . can't miss him."

"Thanks," Harry smiled. "One question though, why don't you just sell to him and get a new place to live?"

"I wash born here, an I wash raished here, and dad gum it, I am gonna die here, an no sidewindin bushwackin, hornswaglin, cracker croaker is gonna rouin me bishen cutter. "

"Um," Harry blinked . . . translator didn't seem to get that last part. "The shopkeeper has my pistol, I'll go talk to Blinks and see if I can set up a meeting."

Harry walked up the street and to the saloon. Taking a deep breath, Harry pushed through the bat wing doors and walked to the bar.

"I'm looking for a man named Blinks," Harry yawned. "I need to send a message to his boss."

"What do you need ta say?" A large ugly man rose from one of the bar stools and glared down at Harry.

"I want to buy him out," Harry smirked. "It'd be a shame to let this old town die . . . in my opinion there are already too many soulless yuppy playgrounds, no need to make another."

"Your opinion don't mean nothing to me," the large man popped his knuckles. "Now get out."

"I really think that this is something that you should pass on to your boss," Harry sighed . . . it had to happen.

"I don't," Blinks balled his fist and took a swing at Harry's jaw.

"You don't want to do this," Harry stepped to one side.

"Yes I do," Blinks took another swing. "Now stand still."

"Fine," Harry's hand whipped out and he jabbed the man in the stomach.

Blinks fell to the ground and started coughing, "I'll get you for this."

"That's what they all say," Harry frowned . . . that was easy.

"Yer dead," Blinks glared up at Harry. "When I tell my boss he'll send a dozen men here to kill you."

"Just be sure to tell him my offer," Harry walked out of the bar with a strange expression on his face. How in the hell had he stopped such a large man with such a light blow?

"I'll tell him," Blinks called out as Harry left. "And you better be here when he comes with his men or we'll burn the town down and come looking for you."

"Whatever," Harry shook his head . . . you'd heard one death threat, you'd heard them all.

Harry walked back to the store and up to the counter.

"How'd things go?" The old shopkeeper raised an eyebrow. "Heard you were gonna go talk to Blinks?"

"He didn't want to pass my message to his boss," Harry yawned. "So I explained to him that I really wanted to talk to his boss and he agreed that he'd take my message."

"Just like that?" The old man raised an eyebrow.

"Well," Harry scratched his chin. "He did say something about calling me out . . . I wouldn't worry about it though."

"If you say so," the shopkeeper shrugged. "Let's show you how to use a pistol."

"And get a hat," Harry smirked. "Forgot to do that."

"What kind of hat would you like?" The old man smirked, "it's a personal choice so take your time."

"No advice on what to buy this time?" Harry chuckled.

"Beaver felt is the best stuff," the old man waved his hand. "Other than that it all goes."

"That one," Harry pointed to a black Stetson with a turned down brim.

"Ok," the old man grabbed the hat and put it on the counter. "Any reason why you chose that one?"

"Reminds me of something I saw on TV when I was a child," Harry sighed. "I watched it through a crack and it's something that made me happy at a time when I didn't have much to be happy about."

"That's as good a reason as any," the old shopkeeper nodded. "Let me just grab one thing and your outfit will be perfect."

"Sure," Harry nodded. "And then can you show me how to shoot?"

"How to draw and fire," the old man nodded. "What did you say your name was again?"

"Mr. Black," Harry put his new hat on with a grin.

"Then here you are Mr. Black," the old man slid a stack of business cards across the counter. "Put these in your pocket and meet me out back."

"One question before I go," Harry smiled. "When Ed got going I had trouble understanding him . . ."

"Yep," the old man nodded. "When Ed gets going he starts talking in old west gibberish. You're lucky, not many people get a chance to hear it anymore."

IIIIIIIIII

"Hey boss," Blinks took off his hat and walked into the boss's office. "Stranger in town causing trouble."

"What kind of trouble?" The Boss's eyes narrowed, "and why can't you handle it?"

"I tried boss," Blinks began to sweat. "But he was too fast for me . . . he said he wanted you out, said he was willing to pay a fair price."

"What did you tell him?" The Boss frowned.

"I told him not to run," Blinks smiled. "And that we'd be there later to settle things."

"Good," the Boss smirked. "Round up the men . . . we wouldn't want to keep the Stranger waiting now would we?"

"No Boss," Blinks gave an evil smile.

IIIIIIII

"How am I doing?" Harry smiled, he'd been practicing for the last few hours.

"Not bad," the old man allowed. "I haven't seen many people with faster reflexes . . . seen quit a few with better accuracy."

"I'm hitting the targets," Harry protested.

"Let me tell you a story," the old man made himself comfortable. "Then you can get your gun from Ed and get to the competition."

"Alright," Harry nodded.

"There was an archery competition in England a few hundred years ago," the old man began. "The target was a fish and at the end of it three archers hit the target. The king looked out and had to decide which man won. Finally he called the archers up to his booth. The king asked the first archer what he had been aiming at and the man replied that he'd been shooting at the fish. The king asked the second man the same question and the man replied that he'd been shooting at the fish's head. Finally the king asked the third man who replied that he had been shooting at the fish's eye . . . who do you think won? Accuracy is important, don't stop practicing . . . you can never be good enough."

"Thanks," Harry nodded.

"Here you are," the old miner walked up to hear the end of the story. "I did what I could and it'll shoot as straight as you need it to."

"Straighter," Harry smirked. "Thanks."

"No problem," the miner nodded. "Good luck with your contest."

"Thanks," Harry holstered his revolver and walked up the street to the competition. Harry walked a few blocks and came to a man sitting behind a registration desk.

"Come to enter the contest?" The man smiled.

"Yes," Harry nodded.

"Ok," the man nodded. "Local or SASS?"

"I'm just passing through," Harry shrugged.

"Ok," the man made a few marks on the paper. "Who are you?"

"I'm just a guy on vacation," Harry sighed.

"Ok . . ." the man gave a slow nod, "you're all set."

Harry walked past the sign in desk and to a large line, "this the line for the contest?"

"Yep," the man in front of him nodded. "I'm Jody . . . you the guy that busted up Blinks?"

"Yep," Harry nodded.

"You know what it means to be called out don't you?" Jody frowned.

"Why don't you explain things to me?" Harry cracked his neck.

"Well," Jody began. "You walk out to the middle of the street and then you shoot at each other . . . course, Blinks and his crew'll probably try to cheat."

"Do I really have to stand in the middle of the street and draw while they try to shoot me from cover?" Harry just didn't understand these people.

"S' what the code says," Jody nodded. "Course, most of the old timers 'll respect you more if you ambush them with a shotgun . . . but that's just my opinion."

"Sounds good," Harry shrugged. "Anything I'm supposed to do before this all happens?"

"Go to the saloon and get yourself a drink," Jody nodded. "It's tradition."

"Ok," Harry sighed . . . why did his life have to get so complicated?

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"And next we have," the announcer glanced down at his notes . . . a guy on vacation? He'd have to spice that up a bit, "the Lone Stranger."

Harry walked up to the line to sound of the crowds cheers and he waved at the audience before taking his place on the line.

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"How'd he do?" The old man shot a stream of tobacco juice out his lips.

"Not so bad," Jody smiled. "Not so good but one does have to take into account that he's a new to all this."

"New hell," the old man gave a rasping laugh. "I remember a figure in black buying supplies from my father's store, that man was one of the best shots I've ever seen."

"Can't be him then," Jody chuckled. "Like we said, he did fairly well for someone who's new at this and not too bad for someone that's been doing this for a while . . ."

"Just outta practice I'd bet," the old man gave a frightening smile as he pulled something out of his pocket. "And I imagine that using lead would throw him off a bit too."

"What are you saying?"

"Every legend has its basis in reality," the old man opened his hand to show the small item.

"It can't be?" Jody stared in awe.

"It is," the old man nodded. "A silver bullet . . . puts a whole new perspective on things don't it?"

"What did you say his name was again?" The younger men were stunned at this new piece of information.

"He's calling himself Black these days," the old shopkeeper smiled. "Feel sorry for the feller dumb enough to call him out."

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"Um . . . Boss?" One of the men knocked on the door to the Boss's office, "I don't think you wanna go after that stranger."

"Why not?" The Boss raised his eyebrow. "You know something I don't?"

"I was in town and I found out who he really is," the man wiped a bead of sweat off his forehead.

"Well?" The Boss snarled, "out with it?"

"Mr. Black," the man's voice broke. "You've called out Mr. Black . . . I'm sorry boss but I'll quit if you tell me to go after him, I've heard what he does to men that go after him."

"That's just what he does when he's in a good mood," the Boss nearly lost control of his bladder. "I've heard what he does when he's in a bad mood."

"So what do you want us to do Boss?" The man licked his lips.

"Tell the men that we're packing up," the Boss smiled. "And that I'll give them their severance pay when I get back."

"Yes Boss," the man agreed nervously."

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Harry was sitting at the bar in the saloon when the Boss found him, "excuse me." The sinister looking man smiled nervously, "you wouldn't happen to be Mr. Black would you?"

"I am," Harry nodded. "Why?"

"Well," the Boss nearly wet himself . . . again. "I've heard that you had a little . . . tussle with one of my men, he goes by the name of Blinks?"

"Yeah," Harry nodded. "He said something about calling me out?"

"I'm sure that was all a misunderstanding," the Boss's hands were shaking. "I also heard that you were interested in buying me out?"

"Yeah," Harry nodded.

"Well," the Boss put a few papers on the bar. "Here are the deeds to all the land that I've acquired in this area if you want to purchase them."

"Sure," Harry smiled. "How much do you want?"

"Um?" The Boss began to shake.

"Here," Harry put a few gold eagles on the bar next to the deeds. "Is this enough or do you need more?"

"That's plenty," the Boss squeaked.

"Great," Harry nodded. "I knew that once you got my message you'd be willing to come down here and talk things out . . . after all, you're a business man not a robber baron."

"Yes," the Boss nodded. "If you'll excuse me, I have to . . . go . . . somewhere else now."

"Have a good day," Harry smiled. "What a nice fellow."

"Right," the bartender picked up a glass and started polishing it. "What did you do to him to make him react like that?"

"What do you mean?" Harry raised an eyebrow, "we just talked."

"Ok," the bartender shrugged. "What do we do if another developer comes?"

"Call me," Harry finished his drink.

"How do we do that?"

"Here," Harry slid one of his new business cards across the bar. "Use this." His business finished, Harry downed his drink and walked out of the bar and back to the portal that would get him to the casino.

The bartender picked up Harry's business card and went deathly pale.

"What is it?" Jody asked.

"It can't be," the bartender shook his head.

"Let me see," Jody grabbed the business card and examined it closely. "Well . . . every legend has it's basis in reality."

-Have Gun Will Travel -

Floo Black . . . San Francisco

IIIIIIIIII

Mr. Black . . . What in the Hell is He?
by Luna GoveLood

It has recently come to our attention that Mr. Black has been seen using a massive scythe as a weapon and the question has come up of what exactly Mr. Black is. In the past, it has been reported that Mr. Black is a several thousand year old ex-dark lord, a living god of fertility, really dangerous, some sort of secret agent, and now the incarnation of death . . .

. . . so I guess the question is: Is Mr. Black the incarnation of death, or did some past scribe witness Mr. Black using his scythe in battle and use him as the basis of the figure we now think of when we think of death?

. . . the evidence seems to show that Mr. Black is all of these things and more.

AN: The wooden Indian is something that used to stand in front of general stores, still had a couple out when I was a kid but I haven't seen one for a while. Remember, Harry is part vamp and part werewolf. He is much stronger and faster than a normal human, Harry hasn't noticed. Some of the story followed the cliché western theme and parts of it followed the cliché 80's movie theme, except the end. This chapter is peppered with references to old western TV shows and movies. I'll give you a hint, one of them was done by Mel Brooks.

Omake: by Nementh . . . I couldn't think of a way to expand or improve it.

Henchgirl opened the locks on the cases containing the goods that she and the Professor had lovingly crafted based on Mr. Black's requirements. While the Cell Floos had been selling quite well, she wasn't sure just how much of the rest of the Black-inspired gear would be desirable to any other wizard.

She shared a hopeful glance with the Professor, perhaps at least one of the other designs would prove to be as popular. As she opened the cases, the Professor started,

"And now, I would like to..." His introductory spiel was drowned out by the massed shouts of "ACCIO" from convention attendees who had started clustering about the front of the booth's tables shortly after following them out of the symposium. He and Henchgirl blinked, seeing neat piles of small Gringotts sacks appear on the table where they had planned to lay out the sale items.

"I suppose there are other wizards who need those types of device," Henchgirl offered hesitantly. She glanced at the now empty space where the stack of new Black Ink order sheets had been. "Who would have thought?"

The Professor merely grinned triumphantly. "I knew when we first met that Mr. Black would be able to offer suggestions that would let us gain recognition. Now, we just have to let the word spread for a while, and in a few years they will be ready for our true works of genius to be unveiled to the world!" He assayed a maniacal laugh, but broke off

as a shocked look crossed his face. "Henchgirl, you know what this means, don't you?"

The two shared a look, and then chorused, "We need more Henches!" As the two continued to discuss possible expansion in the hench crew, several individuals on the edge of the crowd slipped away to report to their various organizations about the latest on Mr. Black.

ACME Inc.

Phil the death eater wasn't an idiot, that made him very unique. Another thing that made Phil unique was the fact that he was muggle born. Taking a quick look around, Phil quietly made his way out of the dark lord's hide out and to the point where he could report to his superiors in the British government . . .three seconds after they figured out how to bypass the wards, there would be a gas explosion in the old Riddle house. Phil would have been both surprised and pleased to learn that his dozen or so friends in the ranks of the dark lord's army were also working under deep cover and they all would have been shocked to learn that the only reason that there was no one on guard was because they were all reporting to their superiors. Later, when the various agencies got together to compare notes the truth would come out. All would agree that such a thing could not be chance and credit would once again be given to Mr. Black. After all, who else had the power and the cunning to manipulate the Dark Lord's guard rotation to insure that all the moles had their duty at the same time?

IIIIIIIIII

"Hey Professor," Harry walked up to the company booth with a smile. "How are things going?"

"Quite well," the Professor smiled. "We've already sold everything we brought down with us . . . and everything we had stored in the zeppelin . . . and given away every brochure and catalog. Henchgirl is out duplicating more brochures and catalogs as we speak."

"Cool," Harry nodded.

"On the plus side," the Professor grinned. "It has given me the opportunity to play with your new motorcycle while you were gone."

"Cool," Harry nodded. "What did you do?"

"It isn't so much what I did as what we did," the Professor smiled. "Several of my colleagues asked for the opportunity to assist in our exploration of possibility."

"Huh?" Harry blinked.

"He means that lots of other inventors and developers helped us," Henchgirl staggered in under a massive load of documents. "Could you help me with this?"

"Of course," Harry grabbed the boxes out of Henchgirl's arms and set them on the table. "Why didn't you shrink these?"

"I did," Henchgirl massaged her sore arms. "Demand is that high."

"Oh," Harry gave a sympathetic nod. "Do you need me to stick around?"

"Not at all," the Professor shook his head. "Henchgirl and I were hoping that you'd test out your new motorcycle."

"Ok," Harry nodded. "What did you do to it?"

"The usual things," Henchgirl shrugged. "It can fly, shoot spells, drop oil, revolving licence plates."

"And that's not all," the Professor grinned. "It got to be a competition to see who could put the most features in the most parts . . . here's the manual." The Professor dumped a massive book on the table, "charmed to such a small and convenient size."

"Wow," Harry's eyes widened. "Where is it?"

"In my pocket," the man in the neighboring booth spoke up. "Frank N. Stein, nice to meet you."

"Nice to meet you too," Harry nodded. "Shrinking charm?"

"Automatic shrinking charm," Frank smiled. "Based on will put in my the team over at Scaled Com Post."

"Cool," Harry nodded.

"We put in a Pooka," Frank pulled a small figure of a horse out of his pocket.

"A what?" Harry blinked.

"A Pooka," Frank repeated himself. "A ghost horse, used to be that they'd escape after seeing water so people didn't bother much with them."

"So you've solved that problem?" Harry raised an eyebrow.

"Years ago," Frank nodded. "The solution was to bind them to something solid."

"Like what?" Harry was getting into the conversation.

"In the old days, we'd use stone or bronze statues." Frank laughed, "I'll bet that the muggles would be shocked if they knew how many statues would jump up and run off if given the right command word."

"So there are Pooka trapped around the world in statues" Harry nodded.

"No," Frank shook his head. "Think of the statue as a . . . leash? Something to call the animal to one location, they aren't trapped in it so much as tied to it."

"Ah," Harry nodded. "What do they use now?"

"Now they aren't used so much anymore," he shrugged. "What with brooms becoming cheaper and more popular and the horse no longer being used as a means of transportation."

"So why are you using it here?" Harry asked with a frown.

"Well," The Smith frowned. "For one thing, coupling your motorcycle with a ghost horse will ensure that you never need to fill the tank, and for another . . . well a Motorcycle is nice, but it can't think for itself."

"I guess that makes sense," Harry nodded.

"Glad you approve," Frank handed Harry the tiny horse figurine. "Just take it outside and will it to turn into a motorcycle."

"Thanks," Harry pocketed the tiny statue.

"And if you're back in a few hours," Frank's grin widened. "I've been asked to inform you that you're all invited to a party that one of the companies is having in the penthouse . . . it's a formal thing but it'll have free food."

"I'll be there," Harry nodded. "Thanks."

"Have a good day then," Frank grabbed a copy of every brochure on the Black Ink table and returned to his booth.

"I'm gonna go test this thing out," Harry smiled. "I'll be back in a few."

"Have fun," Henchgirl waved.

Harry began making his way out of the convention hall until a booth near one of the exits caught his attention. "No way?" Harry froze in shock, "I never thought that was real." In a flash, Harry was stumbling towards the booth with a giant grin on his face.

"Welcome to Acme Inc," the woman in the booth smiled. "How may I help you?"

"I didn't think you guys really existed," Harry's eyes shined.

"We didn't until recently," the woman smiled. "A group of muggle born students decided that the world needed a company named Acme and set to work building it."

"Wow," Harry rubbed his hands together. "What do you sell?"

"Not much," the woman drooped. "We've managed to create a couple charms but we just don't have the resources to complete any of our larger projects."

"Why not?" Harry blinked.

"We're mostly still students," the woman sighed. "In fact, you might say that we're all still students . . . I'm supposed to be in detention right now."

"Oh," Harry scratched his chin. "What charm did you design?"

"The acme charm by Acme Inc." The girl grinned, "watch . . . acme."

Just as the incantation was spoken, a whistling sound pierced the air and a large shadow appeared to Harry's right. Glancing up, Harry's eyes bulged as he watched a large anvil plummet to the ground. Landing with a horrific crash.

"What did I tell you about doing that?" One of the convention organizers stormed over.

"It's ok," Harry waved it off. "I asked her to do it."

"You asked her?" The organizer growled, "and just who are you?"

"Mr. Black," Harry grinned. "I'm here with Black Ink."

"Oh," the organizer nodded. "Have a good day then Mr. Black, I'll just be going . . . somewhere else then."

"You do that," Harry agreed.

"Mr. Black," the girl squeaked.

"Yeah," Harry nodded. "That's not a problem is it?"

"No," the girl shook her head. "No problem."

"You said you had a problem with resources?" Harry continued.

"Yes," the girl began to sweat. Bad enough she got caught ducking out of detention, but by Mr. Black.

"Here," Harry pulled out a business card and wrote a quick note on the back. "Talk to my friend the Professor over at the Black Ink booth, we might be able to work something out."

"Thank you sir," the girl almost passed out. "And be sure he buys a copy of all your spells, I've got to know that acme spell and I'm sure that you've got a few others that'll be good too."

"Yes sir," the girl nodded.

"What's your name anyway?" Harry paused.

"Why?" The girl seemed to shrink.

"Because I'm curious," Harry smiled. "And I'm hoping to do some business with your company."

"Judith P. Brooke," the girl shuddered. "Thank you sir."

"Then have a good day Judith," Harry smiled. "And be sure to stop by my booth to talk to the Professor and Henchgirl, I like what I've seen of your company and I hope to see more in the future."

"Yessir," Judith was just glad he hadn't told her to go back to school.

Harry walked out of the casino with a grin on his face and with a thought he had his new motorcycle out and ready to ride . . . one problem, Harry had never ridden a motorcycle before.

"How hard could it be," Harry shrugged as he straddled the bike.

It took Harry a while, but after a few minutes he started to get a feel for his new toy and in no time he was blasting down the streets like he'd been riding all his life.

Turning down a side street, Harry noticed a parking lot filled with other motorcycle and decided to pull in to investigate.

"How come you smell like a wolf?" One of the larger bikers walked up to Harry, "you're not one of us but you still smell like one of us?"

"What?" Harry took a few experimental sniffs, "you're all werewolves aren't you?"

"Yeah," the biker nodded.

"I'm part wolf," Harry shrugged. "And part a few other things."

"How's that possible?" The biker narrowed his eyes.

"Don't ask me," Harry shrugged. "I got no clue how everything works."

"Oh," the biker seemed to think about it. "You in a club?"

"What kinda club?" Harry looked around.

"Bike club," the biker smiled. "Us wolves are with the Lunatics and over there is a contingent from Hell's Accountants."

"Oh," Harry shook his head. "No club, it's just me."

"What's your name?" The Lunatic held out a hand, "I'm Barry."

"Mr. Black," Harry shook the man's hand. "And if you'll excuse me, I've got some things I'm supposed to be doing soon. It was nice to meet you."

"Nice to meet you too," the shocked biker replied automatically.

The bikers watched as Harry took one last look around before pulling out of the parking lot. And they froze in shock as the form of Harry's Motorcycle seemed to twist into that of a translucent stallion.

"I don't believe it." The biker looked down at the bottle in his hand, then returned his his gaze to the retreating Mr. Black. "On a pale horse he rides, on a pale steel horse he rides . . . they say that every time you get on your bike you ride with death and we . . . and this time, we actually did."

IIIIIIIIII

After talking to the Professor and Henchgirl, Judith made her way back to school and looked through the window in the door of the room where she was supposed to be serving detention.

"Um sir," one of the girls noticed Judith in the window and raised her hand.

"What is it Brandy?" The aged professor looked up over his book.

"I need to take Judith to the girl's room," Brandy bit her lower lip.

"And just why do you need to take her?" The old teacher raised an eyebrow.

"Feminine problems sir," Brandy reddened.

"Oh," the man nodded. "Move along then . . . I noticed that she hadn't been acting herself today."

"Thank you sir," Brandy grabbed her friend's hand and dragged her into the hall.

"What is it?" Brandy released Judith's hand and glared at the other Judith. "We've still got fifteen minutes before the Polyjuice wears off."

"Yes well I'm sure my cat will be happy to get out of detention early," Judith smirked. "I've got great news."

"Someone is willing to invest?" Brandy perked up.

"Better," Judith grinned. "Mr. Black is investing in us, he was really impressed by the acme charm."

"Mr. Black?" Brandy paled, "Mr. I've KILLED MORE PEOPLE IN THE LAST WEEK THEN GO TO OUR SCHOOL BLACK?"

"You don't have to yell," Judith frowned. "And yes, that Mr. Black . . . he wasn't nearly as frightening as we've been led to believe."

"You cut school to talk to Mr. Black?" Brandy couldn't wrap her mind around the concept, "it was fine when you were doing it for the company but to do it for this?"

"We shouldn't even be at school," Judith frowned. "Stupid parents."

"If we weren't here then we'd have never learned enough non magical things to be able to make things work," Brandy scowled. "I like the idea of starting school early so that we can get a 'complete education' as much as you do Judith."

"But we agreed to do anything to make the company work," Judith nodded. "Where are the others?"

"Work detail," Brandy smirked. "We're supposed to be cleaning up the school, I managed to get us out of it."

"How'd you do that?" Judith smirked.

"I told the teacher that you were having feminine problems again," Brandy smiled. "Works every time."

"Why do I always have to be the one that's having problems?" Judith frowned.

"Forget that," Brandy watched as the other Judith shrunk back into a cat. "Tell me about Mr. Black."

|||||||

"How'd the motorcycle work out?" Henggirl asked as Harry walked up to the booth.

"Good," Harry nodded. "Really good."

"I'm glad," Henggirl smiled.

"So . . . wanna go up to that party?" Harry glanced around, it looked like the convention was winding down.

"Nah," Henggirl shook her head. "You go ahead."

"Ok," Harry gave a slow nod. "Are you sure?"

"Yup," Henggirl nodded. "The Professor and I are going to a better party, with other engineers."

"Ok then," Harry shrugged. "See you in a few."

"You too," Henggirl nodded.

Harry walked over to a bank of elevators and made his way to the party. Walking up to the entrance, he was stopped by two large men.

"Name?" One of the men raised an eyebrow.

"Black," Harry sighed. Why couldn't he go to the engineer party?

"First name?" The man froze.

"Mister," Harry glanced up. "Can I go in?"

"Yes sir," the man nodded quickly. "Go right in."

Harry walked into the party and straight to the bar.

"What can I get for you?" The bartender looked up.

"Martini," Harry had been meaning to try that drink.

"Right away," the bartender placed a glass on the bar. "Enjoy."

"Thanks," Harry nodded.

"Good evening," a fat man with a jaw like a bulldog greeted Harry.
"And welcome to my party."

"Thanks for inviting me," Harry took a sip of his drink.

"Thank you for coming Mr. Black," the man nodded. "To be quite frank, I'm surprised that you came."

"Why's that?" Harry took another sip of his drink.

"Because some people have been telling tales that I'm a major figure in organized crime," the man smiled.

"Oh," Harry shrugged. "I hadn't heard that rumor."

"Yes . . . well," the man seemed a bit confused by Harry's reply. "How are you liking the party so far?"

"It's ok," Harry wished he was with his friends. "It's good to get a chance to relax after the day I've had."

"Difficult?" The man was eager to get any information about the mysterious Mr. Black.

"Just long," Harry took a gulp from his drink. "And interesting."

"What are you drinking?" The man frowned.

"Martini," Harry downed the rest of his drink and gagged on the olive. "Damn, almost choked on that thing . . . I'll have to be more careful in the future."

"I'll take a martini myself," the man turned serious. "You know Mr. Black . . . there are a lot of dangers in this room."

"Oh?" Harry was starting to tire of this conversation

"Take the balcony," the man grinned. "It would be a shame if some one were to . . . fall off it."

"I guess," Harry motioned for another drink.

"And that's just the most obvious danger," the man's grin looked sinister. "There are hundreds of other dangers."

"Like the olive in your martini," Harry supplied helpfully. "I was drinking one of those earlier this evening and as you saw, I almost choked on it. Man could choke to death if they weren't careful."

"I'll keep that in mind," the man nodded coldly.

"If you'll excuse me," Harry grinned. "I'm going to go mingle."

"Goodbye Mr. Black," the man's jaw clenched.

Harry wandered away from the man and began wandering around the room.

"Hello," a woman walked up to Harry.

"Hi," Harry sighed . . . here was another person that wanted to bother him

"And who might you be," the woman gave a sultry smile.

"Black," Harry replied deftly grabbing an appetizer off of one of the serving trays.

"What's your first name," the woman asked with growing dread.

Harry turned to regard her, "Mister."

"I see," the woman smiled. "Now if you'll excuse me, I must go greet some of the other guests."

"Good bye," Harry nodded.

Though outwardly calm, the woman was terrified. "Abort, abort now and get everyone out of the area."

"Why?" The voice of her controller asked, "everything is ready and everyone is in position."

"Including Mr. Black," the woman hissed.

"Explain"

"I just ran into him, he told me to leave."

"He said that?"

"No," the woman forced herself to calm down. "His exact words were 'good bye'"

"I see," the voice paused. "Get out of there as soon as you can, we don't want to annoy someone like him and this operation has obviously been blown."

"See if you can find out how he found out about our operation," the woman resisted the urge to look back. "And find out why he decided to but in."

"I will," the voice promised. "Now get out of there."

IIIIIIII

Across the strip, in another penthouse. Another man that looked like the twin of the bulldog faced man turned to one of his underlings.

"How's the party going?" The twin of the bulldog faced man smirked, "our friends the feds finding things to their liking?"

"I've just got word that they left the party," the underling frowned.

"Did they find the deception?" The bulldog faced man frowned.

"No sir," the underling shook his head. "Mr. Black told them to leave."

"What?" The bulldog faced man frowned, "why?"

"It looks like they were annoying him sir," the underling frowned. "And he gave your double a message for you."

"What was that?" The man leaned forward.

"Olives are dangerous," the underling began shaking. "If you're not careful then you could choke to death on one."

"Leave me," the bulldog faced man watched his underlings leave. As the door closed, the man rose and walked to the bar to mix himself a drink.

IIIIIIII

"You wanted to speak with me sir?" The woman from the party asked nervously.

"I assume that you had a good reason to call off the operation agent Simms?" The man raised an eyebrow.

"Yes Director," Simms nodded. "Mr. Black warned us off."

"Black?" The Director's eyes widened, "why would he do that?"

"I don't know sir," Agent Simms shook her head. "The target doesn't follow Black's rules . . . it doesn't make any sense."

"I . . ." the Director reached into his pocket and pulled out a phone, "one second . . . yes . . . I see, thank you."

"What is it sir?" Simms blinked.

"You can end your investigation," the Director smiled. "And tell your team that they can have the next few days off."

"Why sir?" Simms blinked.

"Your target was just found with an olive lodged in his throat . . . died in an accident," the Director smiled.

"How?" Simms shook her head, "I've still got men watching that party . . . the other guests wouldn't have just let him choke to death in front of them."

"They didn't," the Director shook his head. "Looks like the guy at the party is a body double . . . looks like you were being played."

"What?" Simms's eyes widened.

"The actual target was in another hotel across the strip," the Director smiled. "Made himself a martini and choked on the olive."

"How do we know that Black was behind this?" Simms smirked, "couldn't it have been an accident?"

"Our man on the inside says that Black warned the double to be careful when he drinks martinis," the Director smirked. "Warned him that he might choke to death on the olive if he didn't watch out."

"Oh," Simms nodded. "There's no way that could be a coincidence."

AN: Yes it's Black INK. Remember, the Professor can't spell.

What a Long Strange Trip it's Been

"Oh my head," the Professor groaned.

"Good morning," Henggirl smiled. "How are you today?"

"Terrible," the Professor replied with a wince. "Could I get some hangover potion?"

"Nope," Henggirl shook her head. "We're all out."

"But I saw you brew two bottles of it last night," the Professor protested.

"That was for me and Mr. Black," Henggirl replied smugly. "Not you."

"But Mr. Black didn't drink much last night," the Professor groaned. "And you don't get hangovers."

"Better safe than sorry," Henggirl was enjoying herself. "I had Mr. Black drink his right after I drank mine, they're filled with vitamins so it's good to take one now and again even if you don't have a hangover."

"But they taste like used socks," the Professor was beginning to regret the fact that he was still alive. "Why would you want to take them if you didn't have to?"

"Only the ones I give you taste like used socks," Henggirl smiled. "Ours taste like whatever I want them to taste like, today they tasted like strawberry milkshakes. They were yummy."

"Curse you," the Professor buried his head under a pillow. "Where are we?"

"We're over Atlantis," Henggirl smiled. "Mr. Black says that he's recovered the tome and is on his way back up."

"So the diving bell works then?" The Professor's voice showed some signs of life.

"Yup," Henchgirl replied brightly. "And do did the oxygen scrubbers, he didn't even need to use the emergency potions."

"Good," the Professor gagged. "Set a course for England as soon as he gets back."

"I'm back," Harry stuck his head through the doorway. "Not feeling too good?"

"No," the Professor groaned.

"Shoulda had one of those milkshakes that Henchgirl made this morning," Harry grinned at the memory. "They tasted great, thanks again Henchgirl."

"You're welcome," Henchgirl replied happily.

"Spiteful wench," the Professor added his two cents.

"Did you find that book you were looking for?"

"Yeah," Harry pulled the book out. "And I took a look through it while I was decompressing . . . it isn't too impressive, but what can you expect considering the author."

"What is it?" Henchgirl took the book out of Harry's hands and began to examine it.

"A cook book," Harry sighed. "It might have something you can use though, I think I saw a couple potions."

"Thanks," Henchgirl said with a nod. "Did you see anything else while you were down?"

"The city is well preserved considering what happened to it and how long it's been down there." Harry spoke slowly, "I think that it's worth further exploration . . . are there any magical archaeologists?"

"Not that I know of," Henchgirl shook her head.

"Then maybe I'll be the first," Harry mused. "I kinda enjoyed looking through the old city . . . and I had a lot of fun in Egypt."

"You are good with languages," Henggirl added.

"I suppose . . . how long before we get to England?"

"Within the hour," Henggirl sighed. "One of the engines is at thirty percent so it'll take longer than usual to cross the Atlantic."

"So," Harry checked his watch. "About eight Greenwich Mean Time?"

"Sounds right," Henggirl did a few quick calculations in her head.

"I'm gonna catch a quick nap then," Harry said after a moment of thought. "Call me if you need anything."

"Can I borrow your glasses?" Henggirl asked hopefully, "I still haven't perfected the translation charm yet."

"You'll get it," Harry yawned. "Later."

"Bye." Henggirl returned to the control room and glanced at the interments for a second, "Mr. Black to the bridge."

"What do you need?" Harry walked in a few seconds later.

"There is a small surface craft that appears to be suffering some sort of problem," Henggirl replied quickly. "We'll be directly above them in about three seconds."

"I'll port down to see if they need any help," Harry said. "Shouldn't take but a minute or two."

"Thanks," Henggirl favored Harry with a dazzling smile.

"I guess the only thing to say to that is . . . port me down." Harry reappeared on the wooden deck of what looked like a old wooden sailing ship. Taking a few moments to gain his bearing, Harry walked up the deck in search of the ship's master.

"Keep running ya' scurvy seagull dropping." Harry found a strange man bent over the rail and cursing at the ocean.

"Hello," Harry spoke up to get the man's attention. "Are you alright?"

"Yes," the odd man rasped.

"Need any help?" Harry asked with a smile.

"No," the man croaked. "Thank you for asking."

"I'll be seeing you then," Harry continued in a firm voice.
"Henchgirl . . . port me up."

Harry stumbled when he reappeared on the bridge and looked around with a slightly confused expression on his face.

"We put an auxiliary port trans router on the bridge," Henchgirl explained.

"Oh . . . I'll be getting some sleep if you need me for anything." Harry paused before walking out of the room. "And before I forget, I need something that will hide my scent . . . the werewolves knew that I'd been bitten when I talked to them last night."

"Ok" Henchgirl nodded. "Later."

IIIIIIIIII

"We have reached England," the Professor's voice awoke Harry from a sound sleep. "Drink this, it'll solve your little scent problem."

"Thanks." Harry rubbed his eyes. "Feeling better?"

"Yes." the Professor nodded. "Much better."

"Good." Harry glanced at the clock, "anything you want to do?"

"I have a few things that I need to take care of this morning." The Professor nodded, "but my afternoon and evening is free."

"Great," Harry replied with enthusiasm. "It's good to be back."

"I'm sure." The Professor smirked, " why don't you port down now and I shall join you later?"

"That'll work." Harry gave a slow nod, "floo me if you need something."

"Will do." The Professor nodded.

Harry walked to the PortTrans room and pulled out his Zippo. "Port me down."

|||||||

"How is business twin o' mine?" Fred greeted his brother with a smile.

"We've just opened but I have high hopes that things will pick up," George replied. "I . . ." Any further speech was interrupted by the arrival of a strange man.

"What can we --"

"-- do for you?"

"I need to talk to you two." The strange man blinked. "Close the shop for an hour please."

"Why should we do that?"

"What's your name?"

"Your age?"

"Your occupation?"

"Your shoe size?"

"Date of Birth?"

"Mr. Black." Harry grinned, he'd missed these two. "And I think you'll be interested in hearing what I have to say."

"Mr. Black --"

"-- the Professor's boss?"

"We'll close the shop"

"First things first," Harry smiled. "My name isn't really Mr. Black."

"We - -"

"-- kinda figured that"

"It's Harry Potter," Harry deactivate his magical items to reveal his face. "Hey guys."

"You're --"

"-- Mr. Black? The ten thousand year old ex-dark lord?"

"Destroyer of civilizations?"

"Finder of treasure?"

"Mysterious super spy?"

"Death incarnate?"

"The most dangerous man ever to walk the earth?"

"What?" Harry's eyes widened in shock. "No, I'm just Harry."

"Take a look at this mate," George said with a grin. "It's your chocolate frog card."

"Or rather Mr. Black's chocolate frog card," Fred added.

"Chocolate frog card?" Harry took the card and began reading.

"Think he really did all those things?" George asked his twin.

"Knowing Harry?" Fred took a moment to think, "yes . . . I think he did."

"Boy has the worst luck," George agreed.

"Well." Harry stared at the chocolate frog card in shock. "I guess some of this is one way of looking at it."

"So you didn't do all those things?" George was disappointed.

"Not all of them," Harry spoke in a shaky voice. "Some of them . . . some of the other things happened around me and I just happened to be in the area."

"Do you know what this means Harry?" The twins looked at him with expressions of anticipation.

"No?"

"You pranked the entire world - -"

"-- bloody brilliant Harry, good job."

"So . . . anything new?" Harry spoke slowly.

"That chocolate frog card card --"

"-- will help normal people fight off death eaters."

"How does it work?" Harry took the card and s

"You tap it with your wand --"

"-- and chocolate shoots out of it --"

"-- entangling them and rendering them harmless." George finished proudly, "and the best part is that it can't be used against us by Ol'Moldy and his crew of goons. It will attack anyone that has a dark mark."

"Snape'll never know what hit him," Fred laughed.

"Great I . . . do you guys feel cold?"

"A little," Fred looked at his twin.

"Now that you mention it." George walked towards the window, "looks like there are a couple Dementors outside."

"Damn it," Harry growled. "Why does this always happen to me?"

"Just lucky I guess --"

"-- get out there and do your thing."

"I hate my life," Harry moaned as he reactivated his magical items. "Why couldn't I have a nice quiet life? With a white picket fence, where nothing can bother me except maybe the odd dust bunny?"

"Just lucky I guess." George shrugged.

Harry walked out of the shop and raised his wand . . . and lowered his wand. On the one hand, if he used his Patronus then everyone would know that he was Harry Potter and then the reporters and fans would never let him have a moment to himself. On the other hand, if he didn't use it then people would die.

"I really hate my life," Harry mused. Looking down, he noticed that the Mr. Black chocolate frog card was still clenched in his left hand. "What the hell . . . couldn't hurt." Harry tapped the card with his wand and flicked it towards the dark creatures.

About one meter from impact, the card exploded. The dark creatures were hit by a hot, sticky, pulsating mass of chocolate.

Heads peaked out shop windows and eyes widened in astonishment as the Dementors began screeching.

"Well," George spoke up as the twins walked out of their shop. "How do you like our new invention Mr. Black?"

"And do you approve of the modifications we made to your standard card?" Fred asked with a grin.

"Good work." Harry nodded. "Now if you'll excuse me, I've got a shopkeeper to severely beat."

Once again, the heads in the windows disappeared as the listening merchants crawled under their desks and began to shake. Each one hoping that it wasn't him that Mr. Black wanted to talk with. As a consequence of this, most of the shops in Diagon Alley opened three hours late . . . and ten people wet themselves.

AN: Yes it was just a quick stop in Atlantis, Harry just wanted to grab Merlin's book. With any luck, didn't destroy the format. It does that sometimes, that's one of the reasons I use the ILLLLLLLL barrier. The end is near, the next chapter is mostly written and I hope to have it out soon.

Omake

"There I was," the old seaman looked around. "In the Bermuda Triangle, we were running a tour and the lookout had fallen asleep."

"What happened?" One of the children asked with wide eyes.

"Since there was no one watching, the monster got up close and wrapped itself around the ship." The Old sailor shook his head, "there was no way out and I knew that we were all gonna die until it happened. A thick bank of fog seemed to envelop the ship and the monster let go and began swimming away as fast as it could."

"And?"

"And I heard footsteps," the sailor wiped his palms off on his shirt. "And out of the fog, a man appeared. He was dressed all in black and he started looking around. Finally in a low dangerous voice he asked me if I was alright."

"What did you do?"

"I told him I was," the sailor gave a shrill laugh. "Then he asked me if I needed any help, I told him that I didn't and he went on his way and it was only after I got to port that I found out . . ."

"Found out?"

"That Mr. Black was in the area," the sailor whispered. "The monster ran because it sensed that there was a more dangerous predator in the area and I . . . I don't go out there anymore without making sure that there are three lookouts and that everyone of them is awake."

Omake for chapter 38 by Iuinlothana

„...So you know Professor, we thought that we could make this every female costume based on slightly modified Polyjuice but we couldn't afford the ingredients in the amount we would need to make experiments safe"

"That's a very interesting idea, Judith. I'm sure Henchgirl would be willing to offer you her advice..." Professor went silent for a moment "Mr. Black just wanted me to tell you to be careful with Polyjuice experiments. Said he knows a person who found out why Polyjuice and cats don't mix."

"Er, thanks for the warning, I guess. Now, would you be willing to fund production of our Whole Hole Paint?"

"What does it do?" "Allows you to paint real holes on the wall. When it dries however you can only go outside, not in. So far looks promising but we are working on adding the train effect?"

"Train? That's interesting..." Half an hour later Judith was done with the conversation "So how was it?"

"Better than I could have expected, Brandy. They are willing to finance everything. Even Road Runner slacks you said nobody will ever even ask for."

"So why do you look so worried?"

"Mr. Black gave me a warning. I don't know what to make of it. Something about Polyjuice and cats not mixing well..."

"Oh, that. I guess it slipped my mind with all the excitement of Mr. Black supporting us."

"WHAT slipped your mind?"

"You remember Ray, that boy from a team you said you had a crush on?"

"Sure I do? What kind of question is that anyway?"

"Well he tried to ask you out just before that detention Muffy served for you. And you know how she doesn't like that cologne he sometimes wears... Anyway she slapped him so hard he nearly fell. And I believe scratched him with nails a bit. But it wasn't anything serious I'm sure..."

"And you forgot to tell me that."

"Uh, yeah, kinda, sorry. At least you can explain yourself with feminine problems partially"

"Yeah, so maybe he'll speak to me somewhere in the next millennium. At least I know why Mr. Black didn't say anything about me escaping detention. Probably thought this was punishment enough. After all he is nicer than expected but he didn't earn that fame just by a coincidence."

Omake by Chris Hill Endsville, USA...

Harry was on the bridge with the professor and Henchgirl, enjoying the day when he saw a creature in the middle of a town.

"Professor, please stop the ship. There's something I need to do.

After porting down, Harry deployed his scythe, it being the wise thing to do, when he literally bumped into another person with a scythe. The stranger, in a robe that covered his face, said "Here now, what's the rush?"

"Excuse me," Harry said, "I have to go stop that creature."

"Nah..." the figure replied, "No need to do that, it's just Billy's new pet. I'll get rid of it once he's bored."

Harry raised an eyebrow as he noticed that none of the locals seemed to be worried, "Is this a magical town or something? I thought this was a muggle town."

"Oh, it is. But here they don't worry about any of that. How about we get a cup of tea?"

Harry shrugged, and then noticed the bone skull instead of a face. It figured. "Fine. I don't suppose there's something I should be doing?"

"No. Nice scythe by the way. How does it do with the spell casting?"

"Haven't tried it," Harry replied. "I only use it occasionally."

Grim nodded as they reach a local restaurant. He noticed someone with a recording device, and decided to have some fun. "So, I hear you've been on Vacation, Mr. Black. When do you get back to your usual schedule." Grim smiled. Perhaps he could do something to get the person who escaped.

"A few days. It's been relaxing."

"That's good." Grim replied as he signaled the waitress. "Two teas my good woman."

"So, how's life been treating you?" Harry asked, wondering if he was sleeping. "Not bad. Billy and Mandy are a handful, but they are family. If you ever repeat that, I'll deny it however." Grim smirked back at Harry. "I've even got a part time job at the local elementary as a substitute teacher."

"Oh? I thought you'd be busier than that." Harry stated. "Well, I need to take care of those two, and everyone here is so used to seeing me, that I've somewhat settled down." Grim took a sip of his tea. "I am getting a bit behind. Say now, perhaps you could help me."

Harry sighed, it had to happen. "What do you need."

"Well, I missed someone when I was in England, and I was wondering if you would look for him?"

"What's his name?"

"Goes by Voldemort. I have his glass here." Grim pulled out an hour glass that didn't have any more sand puring down from the top. "I just keep missing him when I try to collect."

"Somewhat like myself and Wormtail."

"Somewhat, but since you're heading that way..."

"I'll take it." Harry replied, sipping his own tea after adding a bit of honey.

"Thanks. Oh, if I may, can I have a small blood sample?" Harry frowned, "What do you need that for?"

Grim held up his boney hands, "Nothing, just want a souvenir."

Harry shrugged, Death was certainly into unusual hobbies. "OK."

After getting the vial, both of them heard a voice, "OK Grim, who is he, and why are you sitting down on the job?"

"Mandy, I would like you to meet a friend of mine, Mr. Black."

"Yea, yea. Unless he's going to help, stop gabbing and stop Billy from making an even bigger fool of himself."

Harry nodded. "I guess I'll see you latter. Port me up Professor."

After Harry left, Grim looked to see if that agent was still there with his microphone. "What did you do that for Mandy? Do you know how hard it is to even see him?"

"What's the problem, Grim. You're Death!"

"The problem is that he's my BOSS. He's the Big Man in reaping."

Agent 86's eyes widened as he heard this. The town would have to be reported on naturally, but they didn't dare do anything to it if Black was letting it go. But for there to be a Grim Reaper here, and for Mr. Black to be THE Boss... Well, the Chief would HAVE to hear this.

Repent Sinners

"Good afternoon Mr. Black." The shopkeeper didn't even look up as Harry entered, "how are you today."

"Angry," Harry spoke through clenched teeth. "I have some things I want to talk to you about."

"Such as the fact that I'm the one who started you on your journey?" The shopkeeper nodded, "I'll lock up."

"Why?"

"Have you ever read the Iliad Mr. Black?" The shop keeper asked.

"Yes," Harry nodded. "And don't bother pretending that you don't know who I am."

"One must be careful of unwanted ears," the shop keeper said glancing around. "Do you perhaps remember Cassandra, the woman cursed to see the future but unable to effect it? What do you suppose would happen if she had children and her powers clung to the family line?"

"I have some ideas," Harry allowed. "But I think it would be best if you would explain things."

"We wondered the world for a time, and many of us went mad." The shop keep hissed, "do you know what it's like to be tormented by images and unable to change them. But we were talking about the family, one day one of them realised something . . . they realised that the power that would not allow them to save their empire would allow them an advantage in the business world."

"So we have a wand maker that always knows your name and can usually find something for you without too much trouble, a series of shop keepers that know more than they will admit and always have some sort of item that will turn out to be needed in the future?" Harry exhaled, "why me, was it because of the prophecy?"

"The prophecy is garbage," the shop keeper waved his hand in dismissal. "It's of the sort that's overly vague and only clear after the events have passed. Every day hundreds like it are made and only a fraction of them prove accurate. Divination as taught by Hogwarts provides one with vague possibility's at it's best and complete and utter rubbish at it's worst."

"So then why are you helping me?"

"It may be rubbish but as they say, a room full of monkeys armed with typewriters will eventually produce the works of Shakespeare. Dumbledore's precious prophecy gives a few vague notions that are at best half right, you are a man that has a great chance of defeating the current Dark Lord. You are not the only one that can do so, something the wizarding world has yet to learn is that there is no destiny, we are not locked onto a path." The shop keeper took a breath, "we helped you because of the chance that you could defeat the Dark Lord and because we saw the possibility's of your vacation, we provided you with information and equipment and let you blunder into trouble."

"I see," Harry continued in a tone of defeat. "Perhaps you could tell me why I'm not as angry about all this as one might expect?"

"Why should you be angry?" The shopkeeper was puzzled, "most of us did everything we could to help you remain anonymous . . . I went so far as to give you a SEP field."

"That didn't work," Harry snorted. "Sure it kept people from recognising 'the great Harry Potter' but it didn't do a thing to make my life less exciting."

"May I see it," the shopkeeper examined the item for a few moments. "I find that it works better when you turn it on, at the moment you have it on the lowest setting. Next time read the instruction manual."

"You're telling me that I got into all that trouble because I didn't bother reading the instruction manual?" Harry's voice was too calm.

"Yes," the shopkeeper nodded. "It does go to explain how you could've gotten into all that trouble. I had an idea that it might happen, but for the life of me I couldn't figure out how."

"So you're saying that all my problems stemmed from the fact that I didn't read the instruction manual?" Harry asked in a whisper.

"Yes," the shopkeep replied gleefully. "Though how one person could get into so much trouble . . . maybe you angered a large group of people and they all cursed you as a child or something."

"Let's just put that aside," Harry's teeth were grinding together.

"If you wish," the shopkeeper agreed. "What else do you want to know?"

"How do I defeat Tom Riddle?" Harry asked calmly.

"You run him down in a car, you engage in a duel to the death, you blow him up with a gas line." The shop keeper replied sarcastically, "one would think that a man of your experience would have more ideas than a simple shopkeep."

"The last time he died, he was able to return." Harry restrained his temper, "how does one kill him for good?"

"Tom Riddle made a rather large mistake in his quest for immortality," the shop keeper began to chuckle under his breath. "He placed his chance to return into several small items, as is their nature, many of these items became lost and fell into the hands of my kinsmen. All you must do is kill the body and his snake, we shall do the rest."

"Why didn't you do this last time if it's so easy?" Harry asked calmly, "one would think that it would have been in your best interests to do this as soon as possible."

"Because some of these items were kept beyond even our reach," the shop keeper smiled. "That has been taken care of, as I said kill his body and we shall do the rest."

"If the prophecy is garbage." Harry took a breath, "then how come you can't just get Dumbledore to take care of things?"

"Albus Dumbledore is a great man, but he has one major flaw."

"He loves to manipulate people as if they were chess pieces." Harry finished.

"No, he can't bring himself to kill anyone." The shop keeper shrugged, "though society doesn't consider that a flaw."

"But he defeated Grindelwald," Harry protested. "How could he do that if he couldn't kill anyone?"

"Albus killed one man and was so horrified by his actions that he has never been able to kill another," the shop keeper shook his head. "That's why he's so insistent on following the prophecy, why the Order is more of an investigative organization, and why he hasn't taken any of the opportunity's to kill Tom Riddle. He just can't bring himself to take another life."

"So he's raised me as his assassin?" Harry hissed.

"He's raised you to fulfill the prophecy, and he tries not to think about what that entails." The shopkeeper corrected, "there is a difference."

"So what now?" Harry looked lost, "now that I know . . . what do I do now?"

"That I can't say," the shopkeeper said gently.

"But you know the future, why can't you tell me?" Harry demanded.

"First of all, I don't know the future. I know a dozen or so possible futures, each of which may or may not happen . . . hell, none of them might happen." The shopkeeper held up a finger, "what's next is up to you."

"Then what's a possible future," Harry pleaded. "Just give me a hint?"

"Severus Snape," the shopkeeper whispered. "Is in a seedy bar not far from here. He wishes to give Mr. Black an . . . interesting proposal."

"That's it?"

"That's all I have," the shopkeeper replied sadly. "In the best of times we don't get much, and in the worst . . . in the worst we get too much and our minds are overcome by images of a future that may never exist."

"Thank you," Harry said as he turned to leave.

"One thing before you go." The shopkeeper placed a small box on the table, "you might find this useful."

"Why?" Harry eyed the box suspiciously.

"Because within it is a small bracelet that will make you Harry Potter again," the shopkeeper said slowly. "You may not realise it but you've changed greatly while you were gone . . . your friends would have a hard time connecting their image of you with the image of what you've become."

"An illusion?"

"Much more powerful but along the same lines," the shopkeeper agreed.

"Thank you." Harry took the box, "how much?"

"On the house." The shopkeeper started giggling, "just be sure to read the manual."

"Thanks," Harry spoke through clenched teeth. "I will."

IIIIIIII

Severus was enjoying a moment to himself, school was going to start soon and he was having a drink at his bar of choice. He had gotten a message from one of his sources telling him to pick a private table

and to wait. They told him that someone would be along shortly to help him solve a . . . problem.

"I'm told that you wish to speak with me?" Asked a voice from the shadows.

"I have a proposition for you," Snape didn't take his eyes off the shot of fire-whiskey nestled in his right hand, "I need a man to disappear and I can't do it myself."

"Why come to me?" The voice asked evenly, "why not have one of your friends in the order do it?"

"They don't have what it takes to look into a man's eyes and end his life with a smile," the Potions Master took a sip of his whiskey, "that's why I came to a man like you."

"I see," the world grew oddly silent as if waiting to hear the response. "Regardless of what you've heard, I am not a hired killer."

"I wouldn't presume to say that you were." Snape took another sip, "it was my guess that might be interested in this more for the level of difficulty, then for any pay off. And aside from that, I think that you'll agree that removing this man would be of benefit to society."

"Then state your piece Mr. Snape, and I shall give you my answer."

"One of my old colleagues, a man named Antonin Dolohov is staying in a small room above a shop in Knockturn alley," Snape took another sip, "and across the street is a team of Aurors watching his every move in hopes that he leads them to some of his friends."

"I fail to see why my services are needed, just talk to the Order and have the Aurors arrest him and be done with it."

"Were it only so simple," Snape let out a cold chuckle, "I have no doubt that Dolohov is well aware of every move his watchers make, and that if things are left the way they are then we'll soon be reading ambush and murder of several young Aurors."

"Why not deal with the situation yourself?"

"The surveillance team monitors every bit of active magic that goes on within fifty feet of that room," Snape refilled his glass, "and I have no doubts that they would pick up the mark on my arm."

"I thought that your little . . . tattoo was passive magic?" The voice asked for more information.

"I have recently learned that it maintains it's ability to communicate by sending a steady stream of magic to the other marks, so I can not do this myself."

"I see"

"So, will you take the job?" The Potions master asked mildly, "or must I find someone else?"

"I would be happy to assist you in resolving this matter," the voice agreed, "and now to the subject of payment."

"I can not pay you much," Snape admitted, "not on a teachers pay."

"You misunderstand Mr. Snape," the voice seemed amused, "money isn't something that I have ever been concerned with."

"What then?"

"Curiosity Mr. Snape," the voice paused. "I wish to know why you have chosen now of all times to pursue this matter?"

"He harmed one of my students," Snape answered quietly, "it doesn't matter if I do or don't I like them, I have an obligation to protect them."

"A commendable attitude Mr. Snape." The voice commented from the shadows, "but not the entire truth."

"The truth," Snape's continued reluctantly. "Is that in addition to being my student . . . she has . . . a lot of potential, allowing her to die would be a crime to my art."

"You want a man dead because he harmed one of your students?" The voice sounded amused, "coincidentally the only student that has a chance of equaling you in your chosen art?"

"Not the only one." Snape said quietly, "a few others have some potential among the usual dunder heads that I'm forced to teach. However it would still be a crime to allow any of them to expire before they had a chance to make their mark on the art of brewing potions."

"I see . . . you owe me a favor Mr. Snape." The voice finished in a whisper, "and as you have so far fulfilled your part of our bargain, it is time for me to fulfill mine. So I guess that this is goodbye Mr. Snape."

"I guess it is," Snape replied to an empty room, "goodbye Mr. Black."

As Harry walked out of the bar, he tried not to think about what he was about to do. A short buzz caused Harry to out his Zippo, "yes?"

"It is me my friend," the Professor's voice replied. "Are you busy?"

"I have something I have to do," Harry replied quietly. "But I have some time before I have to do that."

"Excellent," the Professor's replied enthusiastically. "Then I shall meet you in three seconds."

"Three seconds?" Harry looked behind him.

"Yes," the Professor closed his Zippo and put it in his pocket. "I noticed you walking down the street and decided to say hello . . . what is the task that you have to do?"

"I have to kill a man," Harry whispered.

"I trust that this man has done something that requires his death?" The Professor glanced at Harry's face.

"Yes"

"Then I shall help you." The Professor's voice dropped, "who do we have to kill?"

"A death eater named Antonin Dolohov . . . he hurt a friend of mine and a lot of other people."

"Then let us not tarry," the Professor said quickly. "The quicker that we start the quicker that this man is no longer a threat to other people."

"Yeah," Harry agreed. "Let's go."

Harry and the Professor made their way to the flop house that their target was staying in and paused to consider things.

"Do I have to take off my armor?" Harry glanced at his friend.

"No," the Professor replied after a moment of thought. "You shouldn't have to."

"How do you think I should do this?" Harry asked as he handed the Professor his magical items.

"I'm not sure," the Professor didn't look too happy about the way things were going. "I wouldn't use your wand. I did everything I could to make hard to detect but I wouldn't chance it."

"You're right," Harry nodded. "I'm sure they have all sorts of monitoring charms on that flat."

"Are you sure you want to do this?" The Professor had a concerned look on his face, "really sure?"

"I don't want to do this," Harry sighed. "But there isn't much choice, it has to be done."

"Then I suggest that you get in and out as fast as possible," the Professor shook his head. "I'll cause a distraction if I see anyone coming."

"Thanks," Harry shook his head in disgust. "Let me get this over with."

"Good luck," the Professor wished his friend as Harry ascended the narrow staircase.

Harry reached the top of the stairs and slowly made his way to the room that glowed the brightest under his magic sight reasoning that it was mostly likely his target's location.

Testing the door knob, Harry's nervousness did not lessen when he found the door unlocked. Easing into the room, Harry took a slow look around at the run down furniture. Splashing sounds drew Harry's attention to the bathroom and Harry made his way to the door and peaked through the crack.

Antonin Dolohov was in the tub and his eyes were closed. He didn't look like he had a care in the world, he looked relaxed . . . content.

Harry took a deep breath and eased open the door. Two quick steps brought him to the tub and in a flash he grabbed the man's legs and pulled, forcing the death eater's face under the water.

Dolohov's scream was muffled by the water and the death eater frantically clawed at the sides of the tub for purchase.

Harry pressed his foot into the struggling man's face, forcing his face under the water for the last time.

Antonin's struggles began weaker and weaker by the second as his oxygen supply depleted and after one last frantic attempt to get a breath of life giving oxygen, he died . . . he would not be missed.

Harry looked down at his handwork and took a deep breath to calm his nerves. Taking one last look around, Harry carefully locked the door and left the apartment.

Harry made his way out of the building and back to the Professor.

"Are you alright?" The Professor asked as his friend exited the building.

"I don't know," Harry frowned. "I'm not sure I like what I've been forced to become."

"Harry," the Professor ignored his friend's look of shock. "War does strange things to people, war brings out both the worst and best in people, I . . . I can't tell you if what you are doing is right or wrong, all I can say is that . . . is that you are my friend, and I have never known of a time where you crossed the line. If it helps, tell yourself that you've sacrificed your innocence to protect others from having to do the same thing."

"Thank you," Harry sighed. "How did you find out?"

"You talked a little too much after you got drunk in Germany," the Professor managed a weak smile. "Henchgirl knows, but none of the others have a clue. To them, you are and will always be the mysterious Mr. Black."

"Thank you," Harry clapped his friend on the shoulder. "Let's go."

"Have I told you about our latest invention?" The Professor asked, changing the subject. "It is a badge that has many strange and unusual powers."

"Like what?" Harry cast a quick drying charm on his leg.

"Well," the Professor began. "It has many of the powers of the magical items that you carry but in a more compact form. It can obscure the face, block most forms of mental manipulation . . . the usual stuff."

"Could you send a pair of them to the twins?" Harry frowned. "That's odd."

"Yes I can?" The Professor replied quickly, "what is it my friend?"

"I know those girls," Harry said. "And I think I might know one or two of the death eaters that are following them."

"Are we going to do something about this situation?" The Professor asked quickly.

"Yes"

"Then this might be a good time to hear about our next latest invention." The Professor eyed the group of death eaters nervously, "it's an automatic room cleaning device."

"And that will help me how?" Harry whispered back.

"Well," the Professor pulled out a metallic sphere. "It is a powerful explosive device."

"What," Harry's eyes widened in shock. "How is that supposed to clean a room?"

"If a room no longer exists, one couldn't say it was dirty now could they?" The Professor spoke looking entirely too smug.

"I think I can use this," Harry ignored his friend's strange thought patterns. "I think that it and a few dozen spells will put them in the right frame of mind to duel me."

"What frame of mind is that?" The Professor wondered aloud.

"I find that things go much more smoothly when their minds are splattered on the wall," Harry shrugged. "Makes things easier that way. You take care of the girls, I'll take care of the death wankers."

IIIIIIIIII

Hermione was sitting in her room and attempting to study when her friend's owl started acting strange.

"Hoot," Hedwig began twitching. "Hoot hoot," she hopped off her perch and flew out the open window.

"Hedwig," Hermione screamed chasing after the crazed owl. "Wait for me."

Hermione flew down the stairs and out the front door, desperately trying to keep the owl in sight.

"What are you doing Hermione?" Tonks ditched her invisibility cloak and began running along side. "Why did you leave your house in such a hurry."

"There's only one reason that Hedwig would act like that," Hermione spoke between wheezes. "She knows where Harry is."

"Then why don't we try something more efficient?" Tonks stopped pulled a bottle containing an odd looking silvery substance out of her pocket and summoned her invisibility cloak. "This another one of the toys that Black people put on the market."

"What is it?" Hermione stared at the strange container.

"I just call it neat silvery flying stuff," Tonks opened the bottle and dumped it on the ground. "Hop on."

Hermione hesitated for a second before stepping onto the puddle of what looked like mercury, "what now?"

"Now we put on my cloak so we don't get noticed and follow that bird," Tonks spoke as she donned the cloak. "And away we go."

"The cloak isn't covering the bottom," Hermione whispered as clutched the older girl. "Won't someone see that?"

"Black's people took care of that too," Tonks whispered back. "Don't worry, we'll find Harry, and when we do . . ."

"He's in so much trouble for making us worry like this," Hermione finished.

"Look." Tonk's voice lightened, "she's going into Diagon alley."

"Don't let her get away, " Hermione commanded.

The two girls landed and began to follow the crazed bird on foot through a series of twists and turns.

"We're close." Hermione scowled, "I can feel it."

Tonks glanced over her shoulder and frowned, "damn."

"Don't look behind us," Tonks whispered. "We're being followed by at least two known death eaters and they have several friends."

"What do we do?" Hermione asked nervously, fingering her wand.

"We're going to duck down this alley and hope we can loose them on the other side," Tonks replied firmly. "All else fails, it will make it easier for me to hold them off while you escape in the invisibility cloak."

"I'm not going to leave you Tonks," Hermione replied firmly. "I don't abandon my friends."

"I'm a professional Auror," Tonks hissed. "And you will do what I say, I'm not about to let my charge get killed because she refused to follow my instructions."

"Tonks I . . ."

"You are going to escape and get help while I hold them off," Tonks interrupted glancing over her shoulder. "It may not be the most glamorous action but it is the one that will keep you alive."

"I was going to say that it looks like this alley is has a dead end," Hermione gave a weak smile. "Do you have anymore silvery flying stuff?"

"I only had the one bottle on me," Tonks frowned.

"You can still escape, and I'll hide under the invisibility cloak until they go away." Hermione offered, "I think that it's the best chance we have."

"I'm not leaving you Hermione," Tonks turned to face the mouth of the alley. "Get under the cloak and . . ."

"Hello," a small man interrupted. "Are you in some sort of trouble?"

"We have several death eaters about to follow us into this alley," Tonks replied. "So I guess the answer would be yes."

"Oh my," the small man nodded. "Then we had better escape."

"And how are we supposed to do that?" Tonks fought to keep the sarcasm out of her voice. "In case you haven't noticed, we are trapped here."

"No we're not," the small man disagreed. "We'll just leave the same way I came in."

"How did you come in," Tonks refused to keep her eyes off the mouth of the alley.

"I used my portable hole," the small man boasted proudly. "Mr. Black asked me to check on you and this seemed like the easiest and fastest way to do it."

"Mr. Black," Tonk's eyebrows shot up. "Why did he want you to check on us?"

"Can we talk about all this after we leave the alley?" Hermione asked nervously, "I don't think we have much time."

"Ok." The small man agreed, pulling out what looked like a large black silk handkerchief, "all we have to do is stick this on the wall and go through it." The small man finished, then walked through the alley wall's new hole.

"Come on Hermione," Tonks motioned for her charge to go through the hole. "Let's get out of here."

The two girls rushed through the hole to find themselves back on the main street.

"Why did you choose to come here?" Hermione questioned the small man.

"Well, if you'll look around the corner you'll see the alley you were trapped in." The small man replied, taking his hole off the wall. "And I wanted to watch the massacre."

"What massacre?" Tonks asked suspiciously.

"Look around the corner." The small man giggled, taking a peak. "They're just going into the alley right now."

"I see it," Tonks nodded. "Now what?"

"You see that man in the dark hat that's following them?" The small man giggled again.

"Yeah why?" Tonks squinted to get a better look.

Before the small man had a chance to answer, the man in the dark hat threw a small spherical object into the alley.

"What was that?" Tonks asked in confusion.

"Well," BOOM "that's one of my latest inventions, an automatic room cleaner." The small man replied with pride.

"Room cleaner?" Hermione asked nervously.

"Yes," the small man nodded, "if the room doesn't exist then one could not say that it's not clean."

"Now what's he doing?" Tonks watched as the man in the dark hat stuck his arm in the alley, causing several odd flashes of light.

"Russian battle magic," the small man replied. "He says that it puts them in the proper state of mind before the duel."

"Proper state of mind?" Hermione repeated dumbly.

"Hmmm, oh splattered on the wall," the small man replied absently. "And now looks like it's all done but the clean up, have a good day."

"Wait," Tonks grabbed the small man by the arm. "Who are you, and who was that guy in the alley?"

"They call me," the small man paused to increase the drama. "The Professor and the other guy was Mr. Black, you might have heard of him."

"Bloody hell, no wonder the fight was over so fast. Wait," Tonks suddenly remembered the reason that she had come into town, "you haven't seen a white owl have you? Or a small boy with messy black hair and green eyes?"

"No I'm afraid that I haven't," the Professor shook his head. "But if you like, I'd be happy to ask Mr. Black if he's noticed anything."

"Please do," Hermione requested. "From what I've read, if anyone can help us find Harry it's Mr. Black."

"As in Harry Potter?" The Professor's gaze narrowed and the girl's identical looks of shock gave the answer. "I see, then I suppose that I might be able to help you after all."

"How?" Hermione demanded, looming over the smaller man.

"Do you perhaps have access to one of these?" The Professor asked, pulling out a small zippo lighter.

"Yes I do," Hermione nodded. "Why."

"Keep it close tonight," the Professor smiled. "And I shall see what I can do."

IIIIIIIIII

"Hedwig?" Harry said incredulously, the white owl glared down from above the puddle of death eaters.

"Hoot?" The owl tilted her head.

"It's me girl," Harry assured the owl. "I just don't look like I'm supposed to . . . do you want to come with me?"

"Hoot," the owl agreed.

Harry held out his arm to give the owl a place to land. "Henchgirl, I've got an owl with me . . . two to port up."

IIIIIIIIII

"Harry," the Professor called out. "I need to talk with you about something."

"What can I do for you?" Harry raised an eyebrow.

"I promised a young lady that you would floo her later tonight," the Professor replied nervously.

"Which one?" Harry pulled his Zippo out.

"The younger one," the Professor exhaled in relief. "Thank you."

"No thank you," Harry said quickly. "This is something I should have done a long time ago."

"Well . . . I'll just give you some privacy."

"Thanks"

Harry went back to his room and carefully closed the door, Hermione . . . are you there?"

"I'm here Harry," Hermione replied quickly. "How are you doing? Are you ok? Have you been studying? Are you eating enough?"

"Yes," Harry waited until his friend had to take a breath. "To all your questions."

"Why did you leave?" Hermione demanded.

"Why do you think?" Harry snorted.

"At least you were safe," Hermione growled. "Do you know how worried we've been? It couldn't have been that bad . . . could it?"

"Sorry about that," Harry spoke slowly. "I just thought I deserved to live a little . . . I didn't think I had much time left and I wanted to enjoy it."

"Oh . . . and now?"

"Now I'm feeling much better," Harry laughed. "I've had the best summer of my life."

"Why didn't you write?" Hermione demanded. "Or call?"

"Couple reasons," Harry explained. "I didn't want to get picked up by the Order . . . and . . . well I'm not proud of this but I was still a bit angry about the way I got isolated last summer."

"Oh . . . are you coming back to school?" Hermione's hands shook as she waited to hear the answer.

"I'm planning to come back tomorrow." Harry promised. "There's just something I'd like to do first."

"What?" Hermione's voice was filled with suspicion. "You're not going to miss the train are you?"

"No I'm not going to miss the train," Harry replied quickly. "I promise that I will be on the Hogwarts express . . . did you know that you are an internationally known cautionary tale about the dangers of time travel?"

"What?" Hermione squawked.

"I was talking to someone and they told me a story about how irresponsible Hogwarts is because they allowed a student to have a dangerous time travel artifact." Harry was endlessly amused by this conversation, "and to make things worse . . . they did it so that she could take extra classes."

"Where'd you hear that?" Hermione demanded, "who said that?"

"Don't worry about it," Harry whispered into his Zippo. "How is everyone?"

"They're doing good," Hermione said. "Luna especially, did you know that some of those crazy creatures that she's always talking about are real?"

"Oh?"

"Yeah." Hermione nodded, "and the Quibbler's gotten almost respectable with all the stories about Mr. Black that they've been printing."

"Mr. Black?" Harry still couldn't believe it.

"Yeah," Hermione replied with enthusiasm. "He's some sort of super Auror that's been traveling around the world killing death eaters . . . do you think he'll take care of Voldemort for us?"

"I don't know Hermione," Harry answered honestly. "What about Ron and the others?"

"They're all fine," Hermione whispered. "You really should call him, Ms. Weasley's been worried sick about you."

"I'll call them later tonight if it's not too late," Harry promised.

"Professor Dumbledore ordered the Order to give you some more space, he told them that it was his fault that you ran off and that if they found you then they were supposed to respect your wishes and leave you alone if you wanted."

"Oh . . . I guess I cut everyone off for no reason." Harry's voice choked up, "sorry about that."

"That's ok Harry," Hermione could save her scolding until she met him face to face. "Did you have a chance to do much studying?"

"Some," Harry smirked at the irony. "I'm gonna have a lot to teach the DA this year."

"What kind of stuff?" Hermione asked.

"Depends on the level," Harry yawned. "I'm planning to have two levels, one for anyone that can pass the test and the other for the Ministry crew."

"What kind of test?" Hermione asked suspiciously.

"I don't think you'll like it," Harry dodged the question. "But I think it's necessary."

"Ok . . . did you have fun?"

"Lots," Harry sighed. "I feel like I lived a whole different life over the summer."

"That's good, did you buy your books?"

"No," Harry closed his eyes. "I forgot all about that."

"I got them for you," Hermione grinned. "I knew you'd forget."

"Thanks, I'll pay you back later." Harry replied gratefully, "I'm gonna talk to Ron now . . . unless you have something else you'd like to talk about."

"Promise you'll come back?"

"I promise"

"Then I'll see you soon, bye Harry."

"Goodbye Hermione," Harry closed his Zippo and then reopened it. "Ron? Ron, you there mate?"

"I'm here." Ron's voice sounded sleepy, "who's this?"

"It's Harry . . . how ya been?"

"Harry?" Ron was shocked awake. "I'm good how are you mate?"

"Never been better," Harry said quietly. "How're the Cannons doing?"

"They've been better," Ron replied quickly. "They're just having a bad season."

"Don't give up hope," Harry laughed. "Season's not over yet . . . and they always have next year."

"Yeah, I guess."

"They're just waiting till you join the team." Harry said with a grin, "can't have a winning season without their star player."

"Both of them mate." Ron replied, "they'll need a new seeker too. One they got now is a bloody idiot."

"How's your summer been?"

"Good, yours?"

"Good"

"I . . . mum's telling me to get off the floo, later mate."

"See you on the Hogwarts express."

Ron closed his Zippo and went to join his family, "What do you need mum?"

"It's time for dinner," Molly said firmly. "And we aren't going to delay it so you can talk to your girlfriend."

"Wasn't talking to my girlfriend." Ron spooned a large helping of food onto his plate, "was talking with Harry."

"What?" Molly dropped her fork, "did you say Harry?"

"Yeah mum," Ron nodded. "He told me to say hi."

"How is he?"

"He said he's doing good." Ron took another bite and took the opportunity to spoon some more food onto his plate.

"Is he eating enough? Is he warm? Is he healthy?" Molly demanded, "tell me the important stuff."

"Don't know about that mum." Ron shrugged. "We mostly just talked about the cannons."

AN: This isn't the last chapter, there are still a few more before this ends. Not many, but a few. Snape's reason for acting can be either or both of these two things One, he has a bit of honor. Two, he is selfish. He does not want anyone that could add more to his chosen art to die. I've written it so that it's a bit of both but you can look at this however you like.

Omake: The afterlife.

"That's my boy," James shouted. "Harry pranked the world . . . I'm so proud of him."

"But since he's my godson," Sirius boasted. "He got it from me."

"No me," James shouted back.

"Me"

"Me"

"Me"

"Me"

"Me"

"Me"

"Me"

"What are you two doing?" Lily entered the conversation.

"Arguing about who's responsible for the fact that Harry pranked the world." Sirius replied nervously.

"You idiots," Lily added her own volume. "It's obvious who he gets it from, how could you argue about something so stupid."

"We're sorry," James and Sirius drooped.

"He got it from me," Lily finished smugly. "You two might have been responsible for a few of the minor details, but on the whole he gets it from me."

"WHAT?"

An addition to one of the OMAKEs in that last chapter by ranmaogami

Poor Agent 86 comes stumbling into the American Auror Agency "Give me a firewhiskey, NOW!" as he slumped into a seat in front of the Chief's desk.

"What happened?", replied one of the trainees as she brought a bottle of the flaming beverage.

"Exactly my question number 86, it had better be good." Grouched our less than pleased Chief. who was trying to locate Mr Black to get him the hell out of the country.

"You know that SNAFU slash FUBAR that Endsville is where those two muggles trapped the Grim Reaper?" 86 managed to get out around chugging the whole bottle of fire whiskey.

"Yes, that effing nightmare and a half, what about it?" sighed the Chief

"Mr Black is Grim's Boss! Hic thud amazing that one can go from stone sober to pissed drunk in a few moments.

"... Fuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuck" the Chief reached down into her desk, pulled out her own very old bottle of fire whiskey, and promptly joined number 86 dead drunk to the world.

The End is Near

"Thank you everyone for coming." Dumbledore's gaze swept the room. "Kingsley, why don't you start?"

"Yesterday morning, two Aurors working on a tip from one of their informants found the body of

Antonin Dolohov. It appears that the killer found him taking his bath, the killer approached and grabbed one of the victim's feet pulling it out of the tub which caused the victim's head to go underwater. The killer then placed his foot on the victim's chest to prevent the victim from raising his head to breath."

"Why are you placing so much importance on this one crime?"

"Dolohov was killed without using any magic," Kingsley licked his lips, "and there is only one person in England that I know of that has a motive to kill him and a restriction on using his magic."

"You can't suggest that Harry could have something to do with this?" Molly shrieked, "anyone could have done it, and if you're going to point the finger at Harry then why not Ron or Hermione?"

"They don't have the same Killer instinct that Harry does," Kingsley smirked.

"How dare you say that Harry is a murder," Molly's eyes flashed as she began to show signs of eruption, "I won't have you

"I'm not." Kingsley fought hard to keep calm, "what I'm doing is telling you the conclusion that's being pushed by the Minister's office. They say that of all the possible suspects, the only ones that have reason to be reluctant to use magic are the children, and of all the children, Potter is the only one that has what it takes to calmly walk into a room and kill a man and then calmly walk out. They've also pointed out that Harry is missing and thus without an alibi."

"It appears that Cornelius was not being as honest as I had hoped when he promised his support." Dumbledore shook his head sadly.

"He's on his way out." Moody leered, "if he thinks something so pathetic will even go to trial."

"Explain," Dumbledore commanded.

"Tonks," Moody turned to his subordinate. "Why don't you tell them what you told me earlier today."

"Hermione and I were ambushed by a group of death eaters." Tonks began, "they had cornered us in an alley and it was looking grim. It was at that point that a small man who identified himself as the Professor asked if we needed assistance. He then took us through an unknown magical transport device that he called a portable hole. We watched from a distance as a man that said was Mr. Black killed the death eaters . . . all told, I'd say the fight was over in about three seconds."

"Dung," Moody commanded.

"It was common knowledge that there was an Auror team in the area." The filthy man said nervously, "they ordered food and the delivery people are in the pay of some people who passed the information on."

"There you have it," Moody's leer deepened. "Black was in the area and it is very possible that he was aware of the Auror team . . . in fact, it's very likely that he chose to strike because of the Auror team. No sense wasting a training opportunity after all."

"You're right." Dumbledore gave a slow nod, "all Harry would have to do is mention the fact that Mr. Black was in the area and the case would be thrown out of court . . . but you're sure it wasn't Harry?"

"Boy has potential." Moody said with a grin, "but he's not up to this level. It'd take years to get to the point where he could sneak up on an inner circle death eater and snuff him in such a professional manner."

"Thank you," Dumbledore closed his eyes. "That is all that I wished to hear . . . does anyone else have anything to report?"

"Harry called Ron earlier today," Molly volunteered. "Ron says that they just talked about the Cannons. After that I flooed Hermione and she told me that Harry said that he's been eating enough and that he's been studying and that he's happy."

"Did he say if he was planning to come back to school?" Minerva was worried about the possibility of losing another of her favorite students.

"Hermione said that she made him promise to return," Molly said fondly. "And Ron mentioned that Harry said that he'd see him on the express."

"I'm very glad to hear that." Dumbledore reentered the conversation, "and I'd like to ask all of you not to press Harry about what he did this summer. He'll tell us in his own time, at the moment all that matters is that he is safe and planning to return."

IIIIIIII

"Minister," Bones spoke up as she entered the man's office. "I need to speak with you about this plan of yours to frame the Potter boy again."

"How dare you suggest that I would do something like that?" The Minister's voice was outraged, "I'll have your job for this."

"And I'll have your head for doing something so stupid." Bones sneered, "do you have any idea of what you've done?"

"Potter could have done it," the Minister pointed out. "Who else had the motive and the restriction on using magic. Plus, according to the papers the boy's infatuated with that muggle born girl that was injured by one of the dead man's spells in the Department of Mysteries."

"Do you have any idea of what happened today besides that murder?" Amelia was incredulous, "Mr. Black incapacitated and removed some dementors in Diagon alley. You're trying to frame Harry Potter for a crime that was committed by Mr. Black . . . don't you think that might annoy him? Don't you know what happens to people that annoy Mr. Black"

"It was all my assistant's idea," Fudge stammered. "I'll have him fired for this."

"Do you think I'm stupid enough to fall for that?" Bones asked with a raised eyebrow.

"I was hoping," Fudge replied with surprising candor. "Back me up on this one and you can have anything you desire. Money, power, anything."

"You can't honestly think that you can bribe me?" Bones started chuckling.

"If I can't bribe you then I'll have you arrested," Fudge said confidently.

"You think my own people would arrest me on your say so?" Amelia shook her head, "Minister . . . I'm gonna have to ask you to resign."

"And why should I do that?"

"Because if you don't then I'm going to have to place you under arrest for endangering every man, woman, and child in the United Kingdom. I think we both know what happens to people that anger Mr. Black, I shudder to think what might happen to the country if we don't get rid of you."

"What?" Fudge paled, "you've got to protect me."

"I'm giving you one more chance to resign before I place you under arrest, we've already determined that you were the only one behind this latest plot to frame Harry Potter . . . don't make this harder on yourself than it has to be." Bones pulled out her wand, "so what's it going to be Fudge?"

"Get out of my office," Fudge screamed. "Just get out."

"Minister," Amelia said with a grin. "I'm placing you under arrest for reckless endangerment and massive corruption."

"But I can't go to prison," Fudge whined. "They use guys like me for currency in there."

"No they use guys like you as . . . well yeah, currency." Bones shrugged, "on the other hand Black might kill you."

"What if I'm out of the government?" Fudge asked hopefully, "do you think he'd leave me alone?"

"Stranger things have happened," Amelia made a mental note to buy a Pensieve to record this conversation.

"Why can't you protect me from him?" Fudge stammered, "I order you to protect me after I resign."

"After you resign then we'll have no reason to protect you," Amelia reminded the Minister.

"So then maybe Mr. Black will have no reason to kill me," Fudge said quickly. "Of course, I can resign and be safe and then I can become a high priced consultant to the government."

"Or you can go to prison in three seconds if you don't come to a decision," Amelia said impatiently.

"I'll resign," Fudge threw up his hands. "I'll do what you want."

"I thought you might see reason." Amelia pointed at the door, "we'll have someone pack your things and send them over . . . there are two Aurors waiting outside to escort you out of the building."

"This isn't over." Fudge promised on his way out of the room.

IIIIIIII

Harry and his friends woke early the next morning and had a meeting over breakfast to discuss what was going to happen next.

"So . . . why are we going to Sweden?" The Professor asked with an odd look on his face.

"Broom race," Harry answered. "I've wanted to compete since I read about it."

"Isn't that the one that ends with fewer people that it starts with?" Henghgirl asked in a worried tone of voice.

"It goes through a dragon sanctuary," Harry shrugged.

"Oh . . . have fun then." The Professor nodded, "and try not to get killed."

"Yeah," Henghgirl agreed. "That would be bad."

"I'll be alright," Harry said with a grin. "Not to brag, but I'm probably one of the better broom riders in England and the best in Hogwarts. With any luck I'll do ok, I'm just happy to have a chance to try it."

"Do you have a broom to use?" The Professor asked quickly.

"I was planning to use the one that I got from the Mechanic in Australia . . . why?"

"Because I think that this might be the best time to tell you about our latest inventions," the Professor revealed.

"And the first one is an improved broom," Henghgirl added. "The Mechanic has decided that he would rather not leave the Outback but he has agreed to work with us."

"Together we've managed to improve on his older design . . . Henghgirl, bring it out."

"Here it is," Henghgirl pulled a large metal pole out from under the table. "It's faster, more maneuverable, and it has numerous comfort and heating charms."

"Why doesn't it have bristles?" Harry examined the pole carefully.

"Because it doesn't need bristles," the Professor explained.

"Add some before the race," Harry smirked.

"Why would we add them?" Henghgirl scratched her chin, "it's more efficient without them."

"There will be representatives from several of the broom companies at the race." Harry grinned, "and some of the racers will be sponsored by the broom companies."

"And you do not wish them to steal our design," the Professor understood. "Brilliant."

"I try," Harry said modestly. "What else have you got?"

"This coat," Henggirl replied as she pulled out a large coat. "You mentioned that you needed an improved invisibility cloak and we've managed to make one, try it on."

"Ok," Harry put the coat on. "Nothing is happening."

"That is one of the improvements," the Professor explained. "It will change itself to match your outfit."

"Great." Harry grinned, "what else?"

"It has a modified version of the fidelious charm that has a parasitic effect on your magical reserves," Henggirl explained. "When you activate it, you disappear and cannot be detected by any known magical effects or abilities."

"You're not actually invisible," the Professor added. "You just can't be seen or detected by any magical or technological effect."

"Great," Harry put his new coat on. "I'm really impressed by this."

"We're not finished yet," the Professor said quickly. "We haven't told you what it's made out of."

"What's it made out of?" Harry played along.

"Remember those dementors you shot chocolate at?" Henggirl asked innocently, "well we found a use for the cloaks."

"And some Thestral hair we found laying around." The Professor nodded, "not to mention the . . ."

"Wait," Harry interrupted. "Thestrals have hair?"

"Yes they do," the Professor replied. "As I was saying, it also has Tebo hair, acromantula silk, Murtlap . . . that thing that grows out of its back."

"Some hairs from the Nundu," Henggirl added. "Pogrebin skin, quintaped hair, a redcap's cap, Veela hair."

"And we might have used a lethifold to make some of it." The Professor added quickly, "we made the buttons out of dragon teeth."

"Wow," Harry's voice was a bit shrill. "Why did you use so many things . . . and where the hell did you get all that?"

"We wanted to see if we could do it, it was incredibly difficult to make everything work together." The Professor replied. "And since Henggirl had most of it just lying around her potions lab . . ."

"I've been piecing a lot of this together while we were traveling," Henggirl answered quickly before Harry could turn to her. "You'd be surprised at how lucky I was. Every time I walked in to a store it seemed they were having a sale on something . . . several times they gave me these things for free as part of my or as a prize."

"Oh really?" Harry sighed, "I'll tell you about that later. How were you able to get it all made so quickly?"

"The tailor and leather worker, that husband and wife team that we picked up in India that decided to stay on the island."

"I know who they are," Harry nodded.

"They helped us make it," the Professor finished. "They were very skilled."

"Thank you . . . does the fact that you used all these strange things to make it give it any more power?"

"Oh yes, in the coat's natural form it has a similar effect to being around a dementor. People will feel cold, and a bit hopeless . . . we believe that the last part might be from one of the other ingredients." The Professor shuddered, "it is also very spell resistant. We're not

exactly sure about all the powers . . . do be a good sport and tell us about them when you discover them."

"Sure thing," Harry agreed. "So . . . should we get down to the ground so I can register for the race and so that you two can find good spots?"

"Ok," the Professor said.

"Yah," HENCHgirl agreed.

The three friends ported down and reappeared in front of the sign in table for what was probably the most dangerous race in the wizarding world and the only race that went through a dragon preserve.

"Here for the race?" The official behind the counter asked in a neutral tone of voice.

"Yes," Harry replied.

"Contestant or Observer?"

"Contestant," Harry answered.

"Alright," the man pulled out a stack of forms. "Fill out these forms and seal them in this envelope."

"Don't you want to know my name?" Harry glanced over the forms.

"No," the official shook his head. "It's easier if I don't know your names, if you die that form will be sent to your next of kin along with a letter of condolence."

"What if I win?"

"If you win then the guy on stage will ask your name before he hands you the trophy," the man said slowly. "Here's your number . . . good luck."

"Thirteen?" Harry blinked, "well . . . I guess I'll have to make my own luck."

"Have fun," the Professor called out.

"We'll see you at the end," Henchgirl added.

Harry walked over to join the group of contestants and soon found himself talking to another man.

"So what's your strategy?" The man asked quickly.

"I'm just going to fly." Harry shrugged. "You?"

"I'm gonna fly in the middle," the man answered quickly. "I've seen this race before, the dragons eat the first few people and then fly up to pick off the stragglers . . . the middle, that's my place. I'm gonna survive this thing just you watch."

"That's nice . . . I just have to . . . go . . . over here not." Harry walked away from the strange man.

"Hello," a woman wearing a shirt emblazoned with the Nimbus logo walked up to Harry. "Are you here with one of the companies?"

"Not really," Harry chewed his lip. "I suppose I could be if I want to though."

"Oh?" The woman seemed to be confused by Harry's answer, "I'm here with Nimbus . . . finest brooms on the market. What are you using?"

"Something a few of my friends cobbled together," Harry replied. "I used to use a two thousand, I loved that broom till it suffered some misfortune."

"If you liked the two thousand then you'll love our newest model," the woman gestured towards her broom. "It has all the things you loved about our old brooms and a few things we've added for this new season . . . listen to my acceptance speech and I'll tell all about it."

"Acceptance speech?" Harry asked dumbly.

"I'm gonna win this thing," the girl smiled. "Just you watch."

"I . . ."

"Racers to your marks," the announcer's call interrupted Harry's reply.

"Good luck," Harry spoke as they both ran towards the starting line.

"On your marks . . . get set . . . Go," the announcer shouted.

Harry kicked off and immediately speed to the front of the pack. Risking a quick look to his rear, Harry's eyes bulged. There were a dozen dragons gaining on him and one was taking a deep breath in preparation to roast the-boy-who-lived.

Dodging to the left, Harry avoided the jet of flame and a dodge to the right avoided the next.

Harry risked another look back and winced when he noticed that several more dragons had joined the chase.

"I must be pulling every damn dragon in the area," Harry cursed to himself.

A jet of flame ruined Harry's muttering, this one so close that it singed the several hairs and ruined several of the twigs that the Professor had duct taped to the end of his new broom.

Taking a deep breath, Harry jerked the front of the broom and shot up towards the sun hoping that the dragons would loose him in the glare.

"That didn't work," Harry rolled to one side to avoid the nearest dragon's lunge. "Let's try the other way."

Without missing a beat, Harry threw his broom into a steep dive and shot towards the ground. Closer and closer he came to certain death till at the last minute, Harry pulled out and shot towards the finish line one meter above the ground.

Risking one last glance over his shoulder, Harry watched in amazement as several of the dragons plowed into the ground and as several more crashed into each other in their attempts to avoid the fate of suffered by the other dragons.

"Damn," Harry said in astonishment as he crossed the finish line and into glory. "That's not something you see every day."

The crowd went wild when Harry stepped off his broom and he was quickly surrounded by several event organisers and well wishers.

"Congratulations," one of the officials shouted to drown out the din of the crowd.

"Thanks," Harry shouted back.

"Come this way so that we can award you the trophy for first place and the others for surviving." The man added, gesturing towards a large raised platform.

Harry and the other contestants gathered on the stage to receive their awards.

"Ladies and gentlemen," an elderly man stood behind the podium and addressed the crowd. "We have witnessed something special tonight, never before in the history of this race have we had so few fatalities. The cause for this is our newest winner, the man who attracted the attention of nearly every dragon in the area and then incapacitated with a textbook perfect Wronsky Defensive Feint . . . another first in this competition. Come over here sir and accept your award."

"Thank you." Harry accepted that large trophy.

"Are you representing any company?" The old man asked, "or are you here on your own?"

"I suppose that you could say that I'm here with Black Ink," Harry's words stunned the crowd.

"And your name sir?" The old man asked slowly.

The crowd froze to hear Harry's reply.

"Oh . . . sorry about that, my name." Harry looked over the crowd, "is Mr. Black."

"Mr. Black?" The old man stammered.

"Yup Mr. Black," Harry agreed. "Do you need me for anything else or can I be going?"

"You can go." The old man licked his lips, "thank you for honoring this event with your presence."

"I've been wanting to come for awhile now," Harry said with a grin. "But I haven't been able to get here for a while . . . have a good day." Harry hopped off the podium and to his two friends, "shall we be going then?"

"I don't have anything that I need to do here," the Professor nodded. "Henchgirl?"

"Nope," Henchgirl shook her head. "Let's go."

The three friends appeared back on the Zeppelin and Henchgirl immediately grabbed Harry's hand and pulled him aside.

"Yes?" Harry asked.

"It won't take long," Henchgirl assured her friend. "We've got more things to show you but that can wait till later . . . I was wondering . . . would you like to be stronger?"

"I suppose that could be useful."

"Yeah," Henchgirl replied. "But it'll be kinda gross."

"What did you have in mind?" Harry asked with a raised eyebrow.

"I picked up some Re'em blood while we were traveling through the far east." Henchgirl bit her lower lip. "As you may know, drinking it will give you great strength."

"What's the catch?"

"Re'em blood is extremely rare. I was lucky to get the amount that I did, until recently I've been using it for some of my experiments with the Doctor." Henchgirl took a deep breath, "we've determined that we

have a surplus and that we can continue our experiments and still give some of it to you."

"Great," Harry nodded. "What's the catch."

"We don't know how it will effect you," Henghgirl replied. "The Doctor says that she thinks that it will do one of two things. It will either make you even stronger then you became when you became part werewolf and part vampire."

"Or?"

"Or it won't do much to you," Henghgirl answered. "Neither of us thinks that it will harm you in any way."

"Ok," Harry nodded. "I'll try it."

"Swallow this first." Henghgirl handed Harry a small metallic orb, "it'll make you scentless and it will also help you control your new strength. Without it, there's the danger that you'd turn me to paste if you decided to hug me."

"How does it work?" Harry grabbed the ball and swallowed it.

"It will break up into tiny peaces in your stomach. The tiny pieces will move to different places of your body and will do their thing in those areas." Henghgirl answered.

"Thanks." Harry took a deep breath, "the blood?"

"Here," Henghgirl handed over a small vial. "It'd probably be best to just down the whole thing as fast as you can."

"Well," Harry removed the cork. "Here we go." Harry closed his eyes and tipped the vial into his mouth, letting the blood drain down his throat.

"How was it?" Henghgirl winced at the sight.

"Better then I expected." Harry's fangs elongated. "It seems that my vampire part really liked it, my fangs have come out . . . they've never done that before."

"You go get some sleep," Henchgirl commanded. "I'm gonna go floo the doctor."

Harry went back to the cabin and remembering the shopkeeper's advice, paused before the mirror and deactivated the magical effect that concealed his face.

Harry gasped in shock as he took in his new look. Where before his Hair had been solid black, it was now peppered with bits of white . . . a side effect accepting the Yuki-Onna's gift. His face was tan and lined. A few new scars appeared on his hands and arms but the biggest difference was his eyes. Where before they had shined with life, now they were different. Harry gave up after several minutes of trying to figure out what made them different from before and decided to try out the Harry bracelet.

Upon activating the bracelet, Harry shrunk an inch and paled a bit. His muscles lost the definition that he had built up over the summer and his eyes began shining again. After a minute or two of examining himself, Harry removed the bracelet and went to his bed for a bit of well deserved sleep.

IIIIIIII

Death of a Fool

by Laetus Lovegood

Former Minister Cornelius Fudge was found dead in his home of an apparent suicide. Investigates say that it appears the Minister threw himself down his stairs several times and then chose to end it all by drinking three quarts of an acidic substance. Ex-Minister Fudge's most recent project was, as you may remember attempting to frame Harry Potter for a crime that was probably committed by Mr. Black. This paper has very little to add but we would like to note how odd it is that so many people that annoy the mysterious Mr. Black end up committing suicide . . .

AN: There has been some confusion, the only people that know that Harry and Mr. Black are one in the same are: The first Shopkeeper, Harry, The Twins, Henchgirl, and The Professor. No one else knows and the twins are in possession of badges that will protect their minds. Some people have said that Harry should have built things up more before telling the twins, he would have if he had known about his reputation as Mr. Black. Think of it like this, he was a guy in a costume that went to visit his buddies and to screw with their heads and he found out that his costume was real. Harry looks different because he's spent a lot of time outside, become part werewolf, become part vampire, absorbed part of a Yuki-Onna's essence, and many more things. Next chapter, Harry returns to Hogwarts. Thank Moi for the part where Fudge waffles between his fear of Prison and his fear of being killed by Mr. Black.

Omake by aprun

“So, you thought you could all infiltrate my death eaters and give away our plans. I see the true cause of our failures!”

All of the spies in Voldemort’s group gave a big gulp and in desperation, Phil the death eater yelled out, “WE’LL GO AFTER MR. BLACK!”

A collective “WHAT!” resounded in the dark chambers and Voldemort gave a cruel smirk.

“Of course. WORMTAIL! GET ANOTHER PORTKEY!” The nearly crippled Wormtail hobbled away to the portkey shop.

“And no special safety measures old man! We just want any portkey to this location!” Wormtail handed the man the location of where Mr. Black was last seen and waited impatiently for the portkey to be done.

Meanwhile, the shopowner thought of why they would want a deficient portkey, unless they wanted the death eaters to be killed, unless they were just really poor, unless they were actually spies,

unless.... The old man shook his head and made his decision. He handed the wormtail the portkey and wormtail apparated away.

"3...2...1!" Wormtail cackled as he watched the predictably dead traitors port away to their deaths. For once, he wouldn't be hurt in any way in an attempt to kill Mr. Black. For once he wouldn't....Wormtail yelped as one of the remaining spies 'accidentally' casted a tonsil removing spell.

Meanwhile, the traitors arrived at the circus. While wandless, they still had money on them and spent an enjoyable day.

"You know, maybe Voldemort isn't such a bad guy, since he sent us here instead of killing-" the man immediately began to choke on the popcorn he was eating. The others started to babble incoherently to air they supposed was Mr. Black after saving their friend. "WE LOVE YOU MR. BLACK!"

You Can't go Home Again

"Wake up Harry," Henggirl called out. "You don't want to be late for school."

"How long have you been waiting to do that?" Harry groaned.

"For the last three days," Henggirl replied smugly. "I always wondered why my mother seemed so cheerful when she did it. It's fun to rip someone from the arms of Morpheus and then throw them out into the cold cruel world."

"The Professor was right when he said you were an evil woman." Harry put on his new coat, "so what's going on?"

"We've got some other things to show you." Henggirl grinned, "let's go."

"I'm coming," Harry agreed. "Do you got any coffee?"

"I've got a milkshake." Henggirl shrugged, "filled with lots of yummy vitamins and pain killers."

"Great . . . why did you wake me up at six in the morning?" Harry asked feebly.

"Because I couldn't wait to see the look on your face when you realised that I woke you up at six in the morning . . . it's better than I thought it would be." Henggirl was bouncing up and down, "do it again."

"No." Harry stumbled towards the milkshake laden table and downed half a glass, "so what did you want to show me?"

"This," the Professor replied as he walked into the room.

"What's this?" Harry sighed, it was gonna be one of those conversations.

"This," the Professor pulled a small trunk out of his pocket. "Is a school trunk with a shrinking charm . . . nothing special there."

"No," Harry shook his head.

"Aside from the shrinking self charm and self packing charm this is a fairly standard trunk." The Professor slid it across the table towards Harry, "I picked it up in Diagon Alley. We added a few durability charms and as many security charms as we could think of, I included a list of wards that you might want to put on it."

"So why are you giving it to me?" Harry asked with an odd expression on his face.

"Every student has a trunk," the Professor shrugged. "And it would look odd if you did not have one."

"Ah." Harry nodded in understanding.

"The interesting thing we developed," Henggirl said with a massive grin. "Is a spell that will store your possessions in a sub dimensional vault. This spell can be cast wandlessly and is very secure."

"How does it work?" Harry was intrigued by the many uses of such a spell.

"It is related to the principals behind Apparition and Portkeys," Henggirl explained. "We've been researching it and we have discovered that when you use many types of transportation magic, you get pulled into a space outside of our current reality where you are in every place and no place all at the same time and then pushed back into our normal reality when you reach your destination."

"What this does," the Professor continued. "Is place your possessions outside of our current reality until such time as you chose to expend the energy to recall them."

"Making everything undetectable and available at all times," Henggirl finished proudly. "The secure trunk is so you have a ready explanation of where you were storing things if you get asked. We've

filled it with normal school supplies so that even if the security gets breached then it will still hold up under a cursory inspection."

"That . . . makes a lot of sense." Harry shook his head, "you guys have been spending way too much time around me."

"We know," Henchgirl lamented.

"Would it be possible to put a portkey on the trunk?" Harry mused, "one that could be activated from a distance so that the trunk could be recovered?"

"Some listening and detection charms could be useful too," the Professor agreed.

"God I'm getting too paranoid." Harry sighed, "this was supposed to be a relaxing summer."

"Look on the bright side," Henchgirl tried to cheer Harry up.

"What bright side?" Harry asked.

"I don't know," Henchgirl shrugged. "It's just an expression."

IIIIIIIIII

"Harry's on the train," Ron greeted Hermione. "I just heard."

"That's great," Hermione's smile turned into a frown. "I can't wait to give him a piece of my mind for worrying me like that."

"Too bad," Ron frowned. "I don't care that you're one of my best friends, I'm going to tell you what I told everyone else. Don't badger Harry about his summer and don't yell at him."

"What?" Hermione's eyes widened in shock.

"He left because he needed a break and if people start yelling at him he might leave again." Ron explained, "he's my best friend Hermione . . . I . . . I worried that if he leaves again that maybe he won't come back."

"You're right," Hermione ignored Ron's look of shock. "We'll let him tell us what happened when he's ready to and not a moment sooner."

"You said I was right?" Ron couldn't believe it.

"You were," Hermione sighed. "Harry left because he needed a break from the stress in his life. The last thing he needs is me adding to it."

"You said I was right?" Ron couldn't wrap his mind around the concept.

"Oh grow up Ron," Hermione snapped. "There are more important things here."

"Like Harry." Ron nodded, "let's go find him . . . and not ask him any questions or scold him."

"I said you were right," Hermione huffed. "You don't have to rub it in."

"I'm just worried that you might forget," Ron replied slowly.

"I won't forget," Hermione promised. "Let's go."

Hermione and Ron spent several minutes searching the train until they finally managed to find Harry reading alone in one of the compartments.

"Harry," Hermione screamed as she lunged at her friend and enveloped him in a hug. "I'm so happy to see you."

"I'm happy to see you too Hermione." Harry patted his friend on the back, "you too Ron."

"Hey mate." Ron grinned, "you hear about what happened with the defence position?"

"Who got it?" Harry asked quickly.

"It was almost Snape," Ron replied. He was enjoying this way too much, "but they got someone better at the last minute."

"Who'd they get?"

"You've heard of Mr. Black right?" Ron grinned.

"I know they didn't get Mr. Black to teach defence." Harry shook his head, "so who is it?"

"You're right." Ron gave a disappointed nod, "it's not Mr. Black. It's one of the men that the Quibbler got to write all those books about Mr. Black's adventures."

"He was an Auror for three years," Hermione added. "And a mid level dueler, he was never quite good enough to go professional but he was close."

"Sounds like a good Professor," Harry agreed. "Better then last year anyway. But I'm gonna withhold judgement until after I see him teach."

"I was worried about getting another terrible Professor also," Hermione admitted.

"Yeah," Ron agreed. "They've all been gits sides Lupin."

"The fake Moody wasn't too bad," Harry mused. "I probably learned the most useful stuff from him. Moony mostly taught about dark creatures and I don't have to worry so much about them."

"I suppose . . . "

"Hey Harry," Neville knocked on the door frame. "Mind if we join you?"

"We?" Harry raised an eyebrow.

"Some of us from the Ministry," Neville replied quickly.

"Sure, come on in." Harry waved them in.

"We were wondering." Neville glanced back at the group, "if you were going to be continuing the DA this year?"

"I won't be continuing the DA," Harry said quickly. "But I will be doing something else."

"Something else?" Neville asked eagerly.

"I'm going to run two groups." Harry nodded, "one for everyone here . . . the ones that went to the Ministry with me and another for everyone else."

"What are you going to teach us?" Ginny asked.

"I don't want to ruin the surprise," Harry demurred. "You'll see."

"If it's not DA then what are you going to call it?" Ginny persisted.

"Just a study club," Harry replied with a grin. "Who can say anything about a group of friends doing a bit of studying?"

"The new Defence Professor?" Luna suggested.

"I'll deal with him if necessary," Harry assured the group. "But I hope it won't come to that."

"What do you mean you'll deal with him?" Asked Hermione with a frown.

"I mean I'm not willing to allow another instance where a Professor uses a blood quill or any other instrument of torture on students," Harry replied calmly. "If anything like that happens to anyone, I want to be told about it so that I can take care of the situation."

The students shifted a bit and glanced at each other out of the corners of their eyes after that last statement, no one wanted to find out how far their friend was willing to take things.

"You back on the team this year?" Asked Ron, "we could really use you mate."

"No," Harry shook his head. "There are reasons that I couldn't be, not even if the ban got lifted."

"Oh." Ron seemed to droop, "what about being in reserve?"

"I'll think about it."

IIIIIIII

"Mr. Potter." McGonagall grabbed Harry before he had a chance to get to the tower. "The Headmaster would like to speak with you."

"What's this about?" Harry sighed.

"He did not see fit to take me into his confidence," replied McGonagall.

"I guess I can spare a few minutes," Harry agreed. "On the condition that he agrees to respect my privacy, if he even thinks of looking into my mind then I will be quite cross." Sure the old man wouldn't get anything if he did look, but it was the principal of the thing. "That goes for Snape too."

"Come with me." McGonagall nodded, "I shall inform the Headmaster of your conditions before your visit."

"Thank you." Harry nodded, "I read your article in that Transfiguration magazine. Why don't we ever get to learn things like that in class?"

"Because the curriculum is dictated by the need to pass the Ministry controlled exams," Minerva explained. "As much as I would like to teach you the more . . . esoteric sections of my art, I am still bound by my responsibility to insure that you can pass the exams."

"I see." Harry frowned, "then why isn't there an advanced Transfiguration elective?"

"Electives are decided by the school's officials, I don't have any say in what may and may not be offered up as a supplementary class." Minerva glanced over at her student, "why are you asking me about all this anyway?"

"Just wondering why we learned what we did," said Harry with a shrug. "Like I said, your article was interesting and I was wondering why we didn't learn that sort of thing in class."

"I'm glad to see you taking more of an interest in your schoolwork," Minerva said with a fond smile. "To be quite frank, I would have expected Ms. Granger to come to me with this question."

"Hermione wouldn't have asked you," Harry disagreed. "She respects you too much for that, she would just convinced herself that you had some sort of plan about what to teach and when."

"And then she would have learned it all herself so that she'd know it when the time came," McGonagall finished. "Yes, that sounds like Ms. Granger. Though I was unaware that she held me in such high regard."

"She spends a lot of time trying to model herself on you. Some of the students have compared her to you in a less . . . flattering way." Harry grinned, "she really looks up to you Professor."

"Thank you Mr. Potter," Minerva's voice was heavy. "I am always pleased to see one of my students succeed and knowing that they hold me in such high regard is an added bonus."

"I'm glad I could be the one to tell you then." Harry took a deep breath, "most of the students in your house look up to you. Hermione isn't the only one, she's just the only one that takes it so far."

"Thank you Mr. Potter." Minerva took a deep breath, "wait here while I inform the Headmaster of the ground rules for your meeting."

"Thank you Professor, I will." Harry agreed.

Minerva's expression firmed as she walked up the steps to the Headmaster's office.

"Hello Minerva," Albus greeted his deputy with a grin as she walked into the office. "What can I do for you today?"

"Mr. Potter is waiting outside to meet with you," McGonagall replied. "And he has asked that you show him some common courtesy in your meeting with him."

"What kind of common courtesy?" Dumbledore asked with a confused frown.

"You will not attempt to look into the boy's mind, you will respect his privacy, and you will not attempt to get around this by having Severus do it for you." Minerva said firmly.

"He really has so little trust in me?" Dumbledore asked in shock.

"He has a right to keep his private thoughts private," Minerva corrected. "A right that all the students and staff share. To tell you the truth Albus, I'm a bit worried that he felt it necessary to demand this."

"I assure you Minerva that I will respect Harry's wishes in this matter," Dumbledore agreed with a sigh.

"I would suggest that you do." McGonagall gave a satisfied nod, "I don't think Mr. Potter is in the mood for any of your games right now."

"I understand." Dumbledore closed his eyes, "please send him up."

Minerva gave the Headmaster one last look then turned with a sigh. "I do hope that you remember what I told you Albus, I shall not take any responsibility for the consequences of your actions should you chose to ignore my advice." Not waiting for a response, McGonagall walked down the stairs to get her student. "You may go up now Mr. Potter, the Headmaster has agreed to your demands."

"Thank you Professor," Harry said quickly. "I appreciate all you've done for me."

"Good luck Mr. Potter." Minerva smiled as Harry walked up the steps.

Harry reached the top of the steps and walked into the Headmaster's office. "You wanted to speak with me?"

"Yes," Albus agreed with a nod. "Please have a seat."

"Thank you." Harry sat across from the older man.

"You may be wondering why I asked you to come up here, but before we get to that." The Headmaster paused. "Before we get to that, I was hoping that you would tell me why you felt it necessary to ask me to respect your privacy?"

"Because you haven't in the past," Harry replied evenly. "I realise that you've justified your actions to yourself and others by saying that it was for my own good and well . . . I'm sure you've heard the saying about the road to hell."

"Yes I have," Dumbledore agreed. "And why did you feel the need to add Professor Snape?"

"Because you're intelligent enough to find that loophole in our agreement," Harry replied. "And because he is a petty and spiteful man who has abused his power to enter people's minds in the past, I realise that he is not without his redeeming qualities." Harry thought back to how the man had arranged the death of one of his fellow death eaters, "but they do not excuse his actions towards me or my friends."

"I see." Dumbledore nodded, "thank you for satisfying an old man's curiosity."

"No problem," Harry replied evenly. "Why did you wish to speak with me?"

"As a young lad," Dumbledore began. "I tired of my responsibilities and decided that I needed a vacation. I left home and spent several months living in the muggle world . . . I believe that it was the happiest time of my life. I made my living shining shoes at first and I later managed a short apprenticeship with a chimney sweep, I learned more about magic from him and his nanny friend than I had in the past few years from my classes . . . what I'm saying is that I am sorry, I realise what it's like to feel pressured by society and I know how relaxing a vacation can be."

"I see." Harry tilted his head, "I had half expected you to demand to know where I was. I hadn't believed it when I was told that you were willing to remove your grasp over my life."

"You don't really see me like that do you Harry?" Dumbledore was aghast, "are you still angry about last year?"

"No, I'm angry with you for several other things."

"Then why?" Dumbledore had to know, "why are you so angry with me?"

"Why am I angry?" Harry's eyes flashed dangerously as he turned to respond to the Headmaster's question. "I've had a lot of time to think during my vacation and I've come to the conclusion that I'm nothing more than your pawn."

"How did you come to that conclusion?" Dumbledore asked, staring at the young man with honest confusion.

"How did I come to that conclusion?" Harry mocked. "Let's start by discussing the events of my first year, when Voldie went after the stone."

"I fail to see what that has to do with the hostility that you're showing towards me."

"A trio of first years got past everything you had protecting the stone," Harry growled.

"Three very talented first years," Dumbledore countered feebly.

"And if the three first years were able to get past the traps then what was to stop a man guided by the specter of a powerful Dark Lord?" Harry gave a cruel smile. "It was nothing more than a training exercise, you wanted me to face him, you put me in danger because 'you thought that it would help me later in life' or some other useless excuse. And why guard the stone when you could have just destroyed it in the first place?"

"I'm afraid that you're mistaken Harry," Dumbledore's shoulders began to sag, "and I'm afraid that I'm not nearly the puppet master you think me to be Harry. Such a task as you describe would be beyond even my considerable skill."

"Then what?" Harry glared, "you expect me to believe that the tasks were easy because of incompetence and not intelligent design?"

"Harry," Dumbledore sighed. "The professors here at Hogwarts rank among the finest minds in their fields of study."

"Which doesn't include guarding things?" Harry asked sarcastically.

"Yes actually," Dumbledore agreed with a shrug. "They tried but enthusiasm is nothing compared to knowledge and experience."

"That still doesn't satisfy me." Harry replied flatly, beginning to calm down. "Take Snape's task, why bother leaving the correct potion? Why not write the riddle and leave several bottles of poison?"

"To continue your line of reasoning, why not leave a room full of fake keys, why leave a chess board that allows it's self to be played when a chess board that attacks any that come near would be just as easy to make?" Dumbledore gave a weak grin, "I would be happy to answer all of your questions but for two things."

"And those are?"

"The first is a security issue, if you don't know then none can force you to reveal it by looking into your mind."

"And if my mind was strong enough to protect the information?" Harry asked.

"Then I would tell you the second reason, and should you chose to persist." Dumbledore exhaled, "then I would answer any question you had."

"Then just this once, you may check my mind." Harry countered with a frown, "I'm willing to allow it just so I can get to the bottom of this."

"I shall be as quick as I can and I shall not look at anything," Dumbledore assured his young charge. "I . . . I can not seem to get in. It is as if your mind is filled with nothingness, I commend you on your technique . . . it is not something I have ever seen before."

"So then my mind is secure enough to know the truth?" Harry was starting to get impatient.

"Yes," Dumbledore agreed. "I dare say that you have one of the most secure minds in Europe."

"The second reason?" Harry prompted.

"The second reason is that I don't believe you wish to know." Dumbledore held up his hand stall argument. "Sometimes Ignorance is bliss, and I believe that you would be happier not knowing."

"Tell me now," Harry commanded as his temper began to rise.

"As you wish," Dumbledore gave in. "It is my belief that you regard preventing Tom from retrieving the Philosopher's stone to be one of your greatest achievements, is that true?"

"Not entirely accurate but noteworthy," Harry allowed. "Stop stalling."

"What I am about to tell you must remain secret until the end of the war at the very least and I would suggest that you leave off telling until you are in your old age and it does not matter."

"I'll take your suggestions under advisement." Harry's eyes narrowed, "continue."

"A friend of mine once said something to the effect that 'The Truth is so Precious that it must be surrounded at all times by a bodyguard of lies.' What I am about to tell you is something that was until now known only by two people and it in no way lessens your achievement. Harry." Dumbledore licked his lips, "you did not save the Philosopher's Stone, it was never in any danger."

"What?" Harry's eyebrows shot up, "what do you mean never in any danger?"

"The stone has never left the possession of its creator. I've never believed that Tom was destroyed that night at your parent's home, so what I did was lay a trap." Dumbledore took a deep breath, "I told the Staff that I needed them to design a series of protections for

unspecified object and they were happy to help, of course I would come to them, the finest minds in our world for aid in such an important undertaking.”

“It never occurred to them that generations of England's finest security experts have spent decades making Gringotts one of the most secure places on Earth?” Harry asked incredulously.

“Alas no,” Dumbledore admitted with a frown. “I'm afraid that their pride got in the way of their good sense.”

“So you set a trap for Moldyshorts?”

“Yes,” the aging Professor agreed. “If it had been too easy then Tom would have suspected a trap, as it was when he reached the last task . . .”

“He didn't suspect a thing.” Harry began to look at his school's Headmaster with grudging admiration, “I can't imagine what you felt when you returned to the school to find out your perfect little plan had been foiled by a trio of well meaning first years.”

“I will admit that I was not overcome with joy,” Albus admitted. “And I could not admit my plan for two reasons.”

“Because it would let the world know just how cunning and deceitful you can be, and because it would not have been the best thing to tell a group of children that they had just risked their lives for nothing.” Harry shook his head, “you really are a piece of work aren't you.”

“There's also the fact that I didn't want Tom to know that the stone was still available. I'm sorry Harry, I had hoped that you would never know and I had planned to take the information to my grave.”

“Why?”

“Didn't it provide you some comfort to think that you had kept the Philosopher's Stone out of the hands of a madman?” Albus's shoulders dropped, “forgive me, but I did not wish to take that comfort away.”

"You." Harry's face began to turn red, "you." tears began to leak out his eyes, "you."

Albus closed his eyes, waiting for the tirade he knew was coming.

"Bwahahahahahahahahaha,"

Dumbledore's eyes shot open as he watched his favorite student try to regain control himself.

"You crafty old bastard." Harry wiped the tears from his eyes.

"You're not angry?" Dumbledore asked cautiously.

"Angry? Hell no, I haven't had such a good laugh since," Harry scratched his chin, "well . . . no."

"Uh, good then?"

"Good bye Professor, I had better leave before I give into the temptation to ask you another question." Harry patted his side, "I'm afraid my ribs would crack if I had another laugh like that."

"Have a good night then." The Headmaster wasn't quite sure what had just happened, "and feel free to call on me at any time for any reason."

AN: Yes Dumbledore got hit by a clue by four in this story. Evil manipulative Dumbledore is getting a bit too common in stories for my tastes, I'll probably use it again at some point but not in this story. I wrote the scene with Dumbledore the way because of the stunning number of fics where Harry realizes that Dumbles has been pulling his strings for years and that the events in the book were training exercises. Normally at some point, there is a large confrontation where Harry yells at Dumbledore. I decided to do things a bit different, rather than the events of Harry's first year being some sort of training exercise, a trio of well meaning first years disrupt Dumbledore's well thought out plans. People are uncomfortable thinking their leaders are human, so they makeup strange conspiracy theory's to explain away mistakes

Omake for the last chapter by Fate

Snorting softly, the Hungarian Horntail quickly lowered her head and partially covered it with her wings. Her whole body shaking with suppressed laughter as she gleefully watched yet another young buck, eager to impress his peers, plow head first into the ground. Serves them right.' She thought smugly as she relaxed back into her nest. They should have listened to me when I told them not to pursue the racers this time around.' Raising her head once more, she drew in another breath of air, trying to catch that elusive but familiar scent. At least this time he's not after my eggs'.

OMAKE by Typhonis

Henchgirl: "Professor whatever shall we do tonight?"

Professor: "Why, the same thing we do every night, try and build a better mouse trap. I still can't believe you let those two mice go?"

Henchgirl: "But they were so cute and cuddly especially the tall one when he said Narf"

But You can Try

Harry eyes refused to close. Every time he started to relax, one of his room mates would move in their sleep or make some other sort of odd noise. The sounds of their breathing alone was nearly enough to drive him insane. After surviving so many attacks, it had become almost impossible to relax in the company of so many other people . . . even the ones he trusted. Sighing, Harry got out of bed and walked across the room. There had to be at least one secure location in the school where he could catch a nap and after that, maybe Dobby could help him find something more permanent, or maybe the Professor could think of something. Leaving his dorm room, Harry walked down to the kitchen in search of the odd little elf.

"Hey Dobby," Harry called out as he walked into the kitchens. "Can I speak with you for a moment?"

"Harry Potter wants to speak with Dobby?" The little house elf was ecstatic.

"Yep." Harry nodded. "I need to ask for a favor and to give you a proposal."

"What favor Harry Potter sir?" Dobby smiled.

"Can I give you the proposal first?" Harry smiled nervously, "I want to offer you a job."

"You want Dobby to be your house elf?" Dobby perked up.

"I wouldn't mind you as my house elf," Harry replied shaking his head. "But I have another job to offer."

"What is it Harry Potter sir?"

"To start with." Harry squatted so he could look the small elf in the eye. "I'm Mr. Black."

"Mr. Black is Harry Potter sir?" Dobby's grin almost split his face, "Dobby knew Harry Potter was a great and powerful wizard Dobby just knew it."

"It's a secret," Harry whispered to the small elf. "But I figured that I could trust you with it."

"Yes Harry Potter sir," Dobby agreed quickly. "Dobby will never tell your secret."

"I was wondering if you'd be willing to work with me to keep the world safe?" Harry held out a badge, "I remember what you did to Lucius Malfoy when he threatened me and I know that you'd never abuse the power."

"Yes Harry Potter sir," Dobby nodded so hard that Harry was afraid that his head would pop off. "Dobby will work for you."

"Good," Harry nodded. "My favor is . . . well, I can't sleep in my dormitory. You wouldn't happen to know a secure place where I could get some rest would you?"

"Yes Harry Potter sir," Dobby gave a slow nod. "I think Dobby can help . . . what about Winky?"

"Do you want me to take care of her?" Harry took a breath.

"Yes Harry Potter sir," Dobby nodded. "Dobby is worried about Winky."

"I have an idea of how to make Winky happy," Harry bit his lower lip. "Have her come talk to me sometime tomorrow."

"Yes Harry Potter Sir." Dobby grinned. "Come this way."

IIIIIIII

"Good evening Madame Bones," Peter tried to sound confident. "I've come to arrange a deal with you, I want to switch sides."

"What kind of deal were you hoping for?" Amelia sighed, she knew it was a mistake to meet this moron.

"I want immunity," Wormtail replied. "And I want to be relocated out of the country."

"No." Amelia signaled her Aurors to start moving in.

"No?" Wormtail was dumbfounded, "but I have valuable information."

"That's nice," said Amelia. "How about this, I'll keep you locked up in a tiny cell away from all human contact and you tell me everything you know."

"You can't expect me to accept that?" Peter scoffed.

"The alternative is that I turn you over to Mr. Black . . . I hear that he wants to talk to you about something."

"Deal," Peter agreed quickly. "Now take me out of here and keep Black away from me."

"You heard the man," Bones commanded. "Take him away . . . put him in one of the smaller cells."

IIIIIIIIII

Harry and his friends walked into the DADA classroom and Harry took a minute to examine the man. He had brownish hair, he appeared to be in his thirties, and he had a dumb looking grin on his face.

"Good afternoon class," the new Defence Against the Dark Arts Professor greeted the class. "My name is Sidney Hamilton, I was an Auror for a couple years and I also competed on the dueling circuit. My real claim to fame is the fact that I've written several defence and dueling texts, some of which were on the curriculum this year." The man gave an expectant smile, "I look forward to teaching all of you. Why don't we start off with a question, who is the most dangerous man in the world?"

Several students raised their hands and eventually the new Professor picked Ron.

"Mr. Black," Ron replied.

"Good." The Professor nodded, "five points for answering that question. While it's true that Mr. Black is widely regarded as being the most dangerous man on the planet, it's also true that we have a lot to learn from him. Does anyone recall the incident between Mr. Black and a couple of unfortunate vampires in Transylvania? Chapter fourteen of your textbook 'Black Summer.'"

Several hands shot up and this time the Professor chose Neville.

"Mr. Black was betrayed by one of the villagers and turned over to some vampires," Neville replied. "They were going to kill him and drain his blood so Mr. Black did to them what he does best . . . he killed them.."

"That is correct," Professor Hamilton agreed. "Ten points for that answer. The important thing about this incident is that it showed a bit of insight into the way Mr. Black likes to duel, he seems to favor simple spells like the Reducto."

"But what about the Black Massacre?" One of the students asked. "He used all sorts of spells in that."

"That's correct." The Professor nodded, "he has also been known to use unknown spells of immense power, but can anyone recall what kind of spell he used to deal with the vampires?"

"A cosmetic charm," Lavender answered. "One used for quick tanning."

"That is correct." Hamilton looked ready to burst into song, "he showed that simple spells can be used for serious purposes. You see class, Mr. Black likes to use simple and easy to use spells to resolve his problems when he can. This approach has several advantages; the first is that it allows you to conserve energy, the second is that many simple spells are quick to use, and the third is that many

enemies do not expect to face such simple spells and have no defence for them."

"Why does Mr. Black use them?" Another student asked. "He has plenty of power, he has all sorts of quick to use spells, and he has unknown spells that no one could defend against."

"Excellent question," Hamilton said with a grin. "And the easy response is that no one knows why Mr. Black does anything. Some have theorised that the entire summer was nothing more than a training exercise, that Mr. Black was showing us how to do things better. This theory is supported by the fact that several of the Aurors assigned to follow Mr. Black have mentioned that he would often take the time to give them bits of advice on how to do their jobs more efficiently . . . now if you'll open your books to page . . ."

Harry went through the class on autopilot. While he had gotten some idea of how the wizarding world viewed his alter ego when he had visited the twins, nothing had prepared him for this. When it all sunk in, well . . . it was gonna be real hard to keep from bursting into laughter every time someone mentioned the name Mr. Black.

|||||

"Hello?" The Professor knocked on the door of a large manor house, "is anyone home?"

"What can I do for you?" An elderly man with a long beard answered the door.

"I'm the Professor," the Professor introduced himself. "And I'm here to talk to you if your name is Nicholas."

"It is," the old man replied. "What do you wish to talk with me about?"

"Mr. Black," said the Professor. "Would like to offer you a job."

"What is he offering?"

"A new life," the Professor said simply. "You've been living on borrowed time ever since you allowed the public to believe that the stone was destroyed."

"How do you figure that?" Nicholas asked slowly.

"They will only believe that you have so much time left, if they see you around for too long then someone is either going to put two and two together or decide that you have enough youth juice to last them a long time." The Professor grinned. "What we are offering is a new life in a new place for you and your wife, we have a secure location for both you and the stone."

"And I suppose that you want me to give you the stone for safe keeping?" Nicholas sighed.

"Not at all," the Professor disagreed. "It's been safe with you for all this time, why wouldn't it continue to be safe?"

"Then why do you want me to come with you?"

"For two reasons," the Professor replied. "The first is to make it even safer, I do not know what safeguards you've placed on the stone and you do not know what safeguards we have on the island. The second and more important is that . . . well, it would be nice to have an Alchemist on the island."

"What?"

"An Alchemist," the Professor raised his voice. "We have a Potions Mistress, she's also good with charms and engineering. We have me, I'm a magical Engineer. We have the Mechanic that drops in every now and again. We have a goblin Architect. We have a brilliant Doctor. And I think that you would fit in nicely, imagine all the things that could be discovered if we all worked together."

"What kind of resources do you have?" Nicholas was starting to get interested despite himself.

"Quite a few rare and unusual books, the largest collection of Egyptian magical texts in the world, and a cook book from Atlantis."

"A cook book?"

"That is all Mr. Black wanted to grab when we visited the ruins of the lost city." The Professor shrugged, "though there are plans in place to salvage a bit more of the ancient knowledge."

"Allow me a bit of time to discuss this with my wife," Nicholas suggested. "Is there some way I can contact you?"

"Here." The Professor handed the older man a Zippo, "the instructions are engraved on the back. Just call for the Professor."

|||||||

"Welcome everyone to the newly renamed DADA Advanced Studies club," Harry smiled. "This year we'll be focusing on staying alive."

"What do you mean?" One of the students raised their hand.

"I mean that I'm going to teach you how to survive a death eater attack," Harry smiled. "Or at least give you the tools to help you survive a death eater attack . . . I just don't want anyone here to die."

"Too late Potter," the students screamed as two men in dark robes entered the room. "Prepare to die."

"Reducto." In a flash, Harry's wand was in his hand. "Reducto Reducto Reducto."

One of the death eaters collapsed as the spell destroyed his lungs and the other began screaming in agony as his leg was reduced to a couple pounds of useless meat.

"This is what I'm going to teach you," Harry approached the wounded death eater at a calm measured pace. "These are the situations I want you to be able to deal with at the end of this year."

"You won't get away with this Potter," the death eater made a feeble attempt to raise his wand.

Harry stomped on the man's wand arm and aimed at the death eater's head, "reducto . . . any questions?"

"Oh god." One of the students bent over and emptied his stomach. "You killed them."

"This is what I'm going to teach in this class," Harry's face could have been carved out of stone. "Anyone that wishes to quit . . .well, the door's right there."

About half the assorted students stumbled out of the room, leaving Harry with his core group of friends plus a few others.

"Good," Harry nodded. "Then we can begin."

"Um," Ron's face was pale. "Don't you think you should do something about . . . them?"

"The death eaters?" Harry raised an eyebrow, "I suppose . . . I don't need them anymore."

The remaining students watched in shock as the bodies and blood disappeared.

"Harry, what happened?" Hermione stared in shock.

"It's the room of requirements," Harry shrugged. "I required a couple of death eaters for my demonstration."

"I hadn't realized that it could make people," Hermione swallowed.

"I'm not sure it can." Harry shrugged, "it might have just grabbed a couple of them and brought them here. Either way, I got what I needed for my demonstration."

The assorted students looked ill at the implications of Harry's statement.

"To start with," Harry began. "This club will be split into two groups, the first group will learn what I just showed you."

"And the second?" A fourth year girl asked nervously.

"Will be learning some more advanced things," Harry smiled. "Fair warning, I don't want any of you to become death eaters and use what I teach you against normal people. If you do . . . well, I think you know what I'll do to you."

"There's something wrong with Harry," Hermione whispered to Ron. "He's been so distant since school started."

"What do you expect?" Ron whispered back. "We haven't seen him all summer and all of us are on eggshells, he doesn't want to say what he did this summer and he's afraid that we're going to ask him and we're trying to avoid asking him."

"Maybe?" Hermione wasn't so sure.

"Give him a couple of weeks and everything will be back to normal." Ron predicted.

"Everyone take a look at the person to your right . . . now to you left, to your front and rear." Harry commanded, "does anyone see anyone in this room that they're willing to die for?"

Several of the students gave embarrassed nods except for the Hufflepuffs who had answered without any hesitation.

"That's good," Harry continued. "But are you willing to kill for them?"

At this question the students looked less sure and many glanced down at their feet.

"It is a terrible thing that I'm doing." Harry sighed, "a horrible crime. I arranged my demonstration to show you how ugly the business of killing people is. Now I have to do my best to prepare you for the situation where you may have to do it yourself. I want you to think of two things while you're in here. I want you to think of your loved ones, the ones that you're willing to die for and I want you to think about the fact that a dead death eater can never cause any harm to them." Harry took a deep breath and then deliberately met the eyes of every student in the room. "Some of you may know what happened last year, that will never happen again. I am not going to take any one of

you into a dangerous situation if I can help it . . . form two lines and practice spell accuracy with your reductos."

"Are you sure that was necessary Harry?" Hermione asked in a low voice so as not to be overheard.

"No," Harry replied candidly. "But I'm not sure it's unnecessary either, better to err on the side of caution."

Harry supervised as the students practiced casting their spells. He allowed them to go on for several minutes before finally deciding to call things to a halt.

"I think that's enough for today," Harry shouted over the din of several practicing students. "I'll let you know when I have an idea of when we'll meet next. Could the advanced group come up here please?"

Harry's Ministry crew assembled and regarded him with looks of anticipation.

"Don't say anything yet," Harry commanded. They all watched as their friend pulled out his wand and cast several unfamiliar spells. "Privacy charms," Harry explained.

"Why'd you do that mate?" Ron asked with an odd look on his face, "we're safe here aren't we?"

"I don't know," Harry answered honestly. "I would have thought we'd have been safe last year and we all know how that turned out. Which brings me to the subject of this meeting, the first thing I'm going to do is show you each how to cast this nifty little privacy charm that was developed recently. It'll give you temporary barriers around your minds that should protect you from casual intrusions."

"Is that why you don't have lessons with Snape this year?" Ginny asked quickly.

"No, I use something different." Harry ignored the looks of curiosity on his friend's faces. "I would suggest that at the very least you use this spell before any meetings with the Headmaster or before any Potions classes, they have both shown little regard for individual privacy when

it comes into conflict with their goals." Harry's eyes swept the room.
"Any questions? Good, who would like to try first?"

IIIIIIII

"You wanted to speak with me Harry Potter Sir?" Winky spoke up.
Her eyes refused to leave her feet.

"Dobby says that you don't enjoy working here," Harry spoke evenly.
"I'd like to know why?"

"Winky misses her family Harry Potter Sir," Winky squeaked. "Winky misses her Barty, he was a bad boy but he was Winky's."

"So if I asked you to come work for me then you'd still be unhappy."
Harry knelt down to look into the small elf's eyes, "would you like to take care of Barty again?"

"Yes Harry Potter sir," Winky agreed. "But poor Barty is dead."

"He was kissed," Harry corrected. "But his body is still alive, they keep it in a special ward in St. Mungos. Would you like to take care of him again?"

"Yes Harry Potter sir," Winky replied with a hint of her former cheerful attitude. "Winky would like that very much."

"I have a hospital," Harry spoke. "Which I would be willing to use to accommodate Barty, would you like me to move him to the hospital?"

"Yes Harry Potter sir."

"Ok," Harry agreed. "Would you be willing to help out around the hospital? You've got a lot of experience taking care of people and taking care of Barty won't take too much of your time."

"Yes Harry Potter sir," Winky agreed quickly.

"Can you pop into St. Mungos and move Barty or do you need help?"
Harry wasn't too pleased with his actions but he figured that he could live with himself it brought the house elf out of her depression, the

fact that he'd be getting the Doctor some experienced help was just a fortunate bonus in his opinion.

"Yes Harry Potter sir." Winky nodded, "Winky will go do that right now."

Harry watched the tiny house elf pop out and he pulled out his zippo. "Professor."

"Yes my friend, what can I do for you?"

"Warn the Doctor that a house elf and a body will be showing up in her hospital, the house elf will help out if we house the body."

"Is it still living?" The Professor's voice sounded odd.

"He was kissed," Harry replied. "I'd also like to ask if it would be possible to create a wand that can only fire off non lethal spells? I had something in mind that would make it so I could use a Reducto in a practice duel without worrying about my opponent getting injured."

"What effect would you like the spells to take?" The Professor was intrigued by the notion.

"Simulated damage if at all possible," Harry replied. "If I shot someone in the arm for example, I'd like them not to be able to use that arm . . . maybe a bit of pain too."

"I can also put an illusion of the damage," the Professor mused. "Make it look and smell like a real wound."

"How soon can you get it to me?" Harry asked quietly.

"It won't be long," the Professor said. "The spell work isn't that complex, what do you need it for?"

"Practice dueling," Harry replied quickly. "And I'd like at least two dozen of them if possible."

"I shall have them in your hands soon . . . what color do you want them?"

"Bright orange," Harry said after a moment of thought. "I think it'd be best if I could tell at a glance which were the real wands and which were the practice, safety first."

AN: Harry mistrusts Snape and Dumbledore, he doesn't think that either of them will leave well enough alone. I do not know if this is a valid worry on his part, I suppose we may find out or we may not . . . I don't have anything planned. Harry feels bad about how he appealed to Winky, he couldn't think of anything better and I've never seen this used before.

OMAKE:

"What is Mr. Black's favorite color?" Professor Hamilton looked around.

"This is almost as bad as bloody second year," Harry muttered to himself.

"Mr. Longbottom?"

"Black Sir," Neville replied.

"Correct, now can anyone tell me Mr. Black's favorite food?" Professor Hamilton asked the class.

"Still beating human hearts?" One student guessed.

"Happiness?" Another guessed.

"Dementors?"

"No." Professor Hamilton shook his head. "The correct answer is . . . human souls, you were all close those are all foods enjoyed by Mr. Black."

"What the hell," Harry whispered to himself. "I knew they were dumb but this?"

"Ok, next question. What is Mr. Black's hobby?"

"Killing death eaters?"

"Killing in general?"

"Satisfying massive groups of veela?"

"Satisfying massive groups of veela while killing things?"

"Correct," the DADA Professor called. "Mr. Black likes to satisfy large groups of veela while killing things."

Omake by Alliriyān

"Professor, I now understand why you are pinning the fate of the nation on a near-Squib pipsqueak like Potter..." said Snape with an air of enlightenment that didn't quite look right on his pallid face.

"Oh? And why is that?" remarked Dumbledore, popping a Lemon Drop into his mouth. M...Grindelwald flavour...

Severus pressed his fingertips together and lightly rested his chin on them. "Potter..." said he, after a pregnant pause; "...is Mr Black."

Dumbledore choked on his sweet, spat it out, went dead-white and then proceeded to have a heart attack on the floor. But Harry was his innocent, adventuring, anti-serial-killer protege!

The Potions Master allowed this to continue for a few moments with a smug grin.

"Now you know how I felt when you told me Potter was a prophesied hero," he smirked. "April Fool!"

Suddenly recovering, ALbus struggled back into his chair and glared at his employee. "It's not April." he replied flatly.

"So? You had it coming." sneered Snape, and without further ado he swept out of the office.

Incensed, the Headmaster stabbed his wand in that direction and laughed when a high scream sounded. The escalating staircase had vanished...just like that.

IIIIIIIIII

On board the zeppelin, Henchgirl looked into a strange spinning contraption.

"Professor!" she gasped, "Harry's been found out!"

Omake by I)ark/(-)ngel

"So, what would have happened if Voldemort got the fake stone?"

Harry asked.

"If he attempted to use it, he would have been transmuted into something far more precious than gold." Dumbledore said with his twinkle working on overdrive.

"What?" asked Harry leaning in eagerly.

"That is a secret left for when you are older, my boy."

"Please tell me?"

"No."

"Please?" Harry, settling in to outwait the old mage.

six hours later

"Please?"

"Fine." the aging wizard replied in something vaguely resembling Trevor's speech.

"He would have turned into... a lemon drop." All signs of fatigue from his long argument vanished under the incredible smugness that can only build up after 150 plus years of life.

"HOW IS THAT USEFUL!" Harry yelled.

"After that I would defeat him by an ancient technique known as (dramatic pause for effect) ... (more dramatic pause that had less effect)... (small snore)" The old man gave all appearances of having fell asleep.

"DUMBLEDORE TELL ME!" Harry yelled, losing patience.

"...Oh, yes, where was I?" Dumbledore said, suspiciously awake all of the sudden.

"The ancient technique." Harry said, the current configuration of his mouth probably being more suited to mastication than speech.

"I will now reveal the ancient secret... an art known as ... digestion!" Dumbledore stared expectantly at Harry, preening in a manner to make Fawkes jealous as he waited for the admiration that would doubtless be involuntary after such a revelation of cleverness. Harry instead responded with a classic faceplant.

"Are you alright, my boy?" Dumbledore queried as said adolescent slowly rose, hands twitching around what anyone but Dumbledore could see was an imaginery neck.

"Want to see what's left of Grindlewald?" Dumbledore said in a severe misinterpretation of the expression. He then reached towards a Tupperware with a 'yuck' sticker on it.

Harry, seeing the sticker decided to leave while he was... well, he didn't know where he was, but he was positive where he was heading was worse.

"Poor boy, couldn't stand my brilliance - I should have used a longer dramatic pause." The old wizard

said as he settled in to remember just how sweet victory could taste, not to mention a little sour.

He's a Pinball Wizard

"May I have a moment of your time Mr. Potter?" McGonagall snagged Harry on his way to the great hall.

"What can I do for you Professor?"

"I was able to get your Quidditch ban lifted, imagine my surprise when I was told that you did not intend to play this year." The old woman sighed, "the last thing I wish to do is tell you how to live your life. I do not intend to force you to play and I am not going to waste your time trying to convince you to change your mind. What I would like is for you to tell me why?"

"Alright Professor," Harry agreed. Taking a deep breath, Harry took a moment to decide how to word his response. "Can I have your word that this will stay between us?"

"You may," McGonagall agreed. "I promise not to reveal anything I learn from this conversation to anyone without your express permission."

"Can you see that tapestry at the end of the hall?" Harry removed his glasses.

"Yes, what does that have to do with anything?"

"Here." Harry handed the old woman his glasses and began reading the plaque above the tapestry. "The four founders decided to build a school for magic, they decided that . . . do I need to read anymore or do you get the picture?"

"Your eyes have been repaired," Minerva said. The old woman handed Harry his glasses back.

"Not just repaired." Harry sighed, "I got curious about Madame Hooch a few years ago. I wanted to know if she'd ever been in Professional Quidditch."

"And you found out about her accident." Minerva closed her eyes, "you read that it was determined that she could no longer play professional Quidditch because of her enhanced eyes."

"That is correct Professor," Harry agreed. "It would not be fair to take a spot on the team that could go to someone else."

"Would you still be willing to play on the reserve team?" Minerva asked with a hopeful smile.

"If you need me then I would be happy to play for the house team," Harry said after a moment of thought. "But only if you need me."

"Thank you Mr. Potter, I appreciate the fact that you are willing to help out." McGonagall turned to leave. "Before I go, may I ask you one more question?"

"You may Professor."

"How did you fix your eyes?" McGonagall asked, "I would not have thought that you would do something that would destroy your Quidditch career."

"It was an accident Professor," Harry admitted. "I was surprised to learn that perfect eyesight was a side effect."

"I see," Minerva said pausing to think. "It is not my place to say, but I dare say that there is a book in the library with a green cover on the third shelf from the front. It is wearing the dust jacket of a book entitled the History of Socks and it is hidden behind a book on gardening. I believe that if you were to take the time to read this book, that you will not suffer as many side effects. Good day Mr. Potter, I assure you that I have no proof. Since I have no proof, I have no obligation to do anything about this situation."

"Thank you Professor," a very confused Harry replied. After his talk with his head of house, Harry had planned to go to the great hall but curiosity got the better of him and he changed course to go to the library. It took him fifteen minutes of searching, but he found the book that McGonagall had told him about. "The Illegal guide to Becoming

an Illegal Animagus hmmm?" Harry read the title, "I can see how this would be useful."

|||||||

"Grab him," George yelled. That command caused his twin to grab their brother Percy as walked out of the Ministry building. "Stun him," George commanded.

"Got him," Fred said with satisfaction.

"Good job, let's get out of here before someone notices."

"Good idea," Fred agreed. "You have the portkey?"

"Just touch this to Percy and we'll be back in our shop," George held out an old newspaper.

The three brothers reappeared in the back of the joke shop and within minutes, Percy was strapped to a chair.

"Shall we find out why he left the family before we check up on the Ministry?" George asked.

"The Ministry is the only thing we need to know," Fred said. "But I would like to know why he's decided to become a bigger prat than usual."

"Let's keep our hoods up for the interrogation," George suggested. "He hasn't seen our faces and I'd rather he not know who did this to him."

"Right," George agreed.

The two brothers pulled up their hoods and awakened their stunned brother.

"Who are you and where have you taken me?" Percy demanded.

"Two drops of Veritaserum I think," George murmured. "Get his mouth open."

Percy struggled as one of the dark figures forced his mouth open so the other could administer the truth potion.

"Why did you leave your family?" The dark figures demanded.

"I didn't," Percy moaned.

Fred and George shared a look, "why did you abandon your parents and siblings?"

"To keep my family safe," Percy replied.

"How did abandoning them keep them safe?" George demanded.

"I didn't abandon my family," Percy said dully.

"Why did you abandoning your parents and siblings? How did that keep your family safe?" Fred was starting to get the hang of questioning someone under Veritaserum.

"Because they didn't bother the families of Ministry personell if the stayed out of things," said Percy. A line of drool began to run out of the corner of the boy's mouth. "If I stayed with my parents then my family would die."

"He isn't making any sense," Fred muttered. "Do you have any idea what he's talking about?"

"No," George said. "But I think I have a way to find out."

"Enlighten me," Fred suggested.

"Who is your family?" George demanded.

"Penny and the baby," Percy sobbed.

Fred and George shared another look of shock, "what baby?"

"My baby." Percy's body shuddered as he fought the effects of the potion.

"How old is your baby?" Fred licked his lips, this was not what he was expecting.

"Not born yet." Percy's jaw clenched.

"Where are they?" George asked, "where are they Percy?"

"Has the Potion worn off?" Fred bent down to examine his brother, "it doesn't look like it's worn off."

"It should still be good for a few minutes," George agreed. "Think we should give him another dose?"

"Should be safe," Fred mused. "Mum'll want to know about her grandchild."

"Open his mouth," George said after a moment of thought. "We'll find Penny and bring the both of them back to mum."

"She'll be happy to have the prat back," Fred said cheerfully. "And so will we."

"Too true twin O' mine."

George forced his wayward brother's mouth open and went pale. "Bloody hell, we need to get him to a healer."

"What is it?" George asked quickly.

"His mouth's filled with blood, I think he bit through his tongue." Fred said urgently, "call the Doctor."

"Doctor," George called into his Zippo. "We need you here now, we have a medical emergency."

"I'm on my way," the Doctor's voice replied. "What's the situation?"

"We had our brother under Veritaserum and he bit through his tongue," George said quickly. "Please hurry."

"I'm here," the Doctor said as she appeared in the shop. "Where's the problem?"

"Right here." Fred was still holding his older brother, "he bit through his tongue . . . I don't know why."

"What happened?" The doctor cast a quick blood clotting charm and began assessing the situation.

"I opened his mouth to give him more Veritaserum after he wouldn't answer a question and it was filled with blood," Fred said quickly. Both twins were distressed by the situation that they'd found themselves in.

"What question did he refuse to ask?" The doctor cast a few diagnostic charms.

"We wanted to know where his family was," Fred answered.

Percy began struggling the moment he heard Fred's answer.

"Damn," the Doctor screamed. "Stun him."

Fred cast a quick stunner and looked a little lost. "What happened?"

"He obviously doesn't want to tell you about his family," the Doctor replied dryly. "Because of the Veritaserum, it'll be a few minutes before I can give him any healing potions. In the mean time, I want to see the transcripts of your interview."

"Right," Fred replied.

George handed the Doctor the paper. Both twins shot nervous looks at their older brother as the Doctor read.

"I thought you two were supposed to be checking out the Ministry?" The Doctor asked suddenly.

"We wanted to see why he was being such a prat," George said quietly.

"We didn't think this would happen," Fred added.

"I suggest that you both get out of this room," the Doctor growled. "I am not feeling very charitable towards the two of you at the moment and it might be best if you were out of my sight."

"But he's going to be ok?" George persisted.

"We're not leaving until you tell us if he'll be ok," Fred agreed. "He's our brother and we still care about him."

"No matter how big a prat he's been," George added.

"Especially now that we know why," Fred finished.

"He should be fine," the Doctor said quickly. "Now go."

The twins beat a hasty retreat and the Doctor waved her wand a few more times to awaken her patient.

"How do you feel?" She asked in her professional voice.

"A bit sore," Percy said slowly. "It is hard to talk."

"That's normal," the Doctor said quickly. "You nearly bit through your tongue and the muscles are still repairing themselves. Are there any sore spots?"

"No," Percy said after a moment of checking. "Who are you?"

"I'm the Doctor," she replied. "I work for Mr. Black."

"Thank god," Percy sagged in relief. "I thought I was . . ."

"I'm sorry about those two idiots," the Doctor continued. "They'll have to make their own apologies later. Why don't you tell me about your Penny."

"Why?" Percy stiffened.

"Because I want you to use your tongue," the Doctor replied. "I am not going to ask her where she is, I've seen what you do when that happens and I have no desire to reattach any bits of your body twice in one day."

"Oh," Percy said. "I'm sorry, I just don't want to lose them."

"It's ok," the Doctor assured Percy. "And I may have the solution to that problem as well."

|||||||

Harry was on his way to the hidden room that he'd been using as his sleeping quarters when he ran into his friend on patrol.

"Hello Ron," Harry greeted his friend. "How are things?"

"They're good," Ron said nervously. "Things are quiet . . . shouldn't you be in bed? Why don't you go back to the tower?"

"You feeling alright mate?" Harry blinked at Ron's odd response, the other boy had never really taken his duties seriously.

"Yeah mate," Ron said quickly. "I just don't want you to get into any trouble . . . so you'd better get back to the tower."

"You trying to get rid of me?" Harry asked slowly.

"Why would you think that?" Ron giggled nervously.

"Are you here Ron?" A girl's whispered voice asked from down the hall.

"Heh," Ron reddened. "Could I have a bit of time alone Harry?"

"Who is that?" Harry began walking towards the voice, "hello Hannah."

"Hi Harry," the Hufflepuff girl replied nervously. "What are you doing out at this time of night?"

"Satisfying my curiosity," Harry said dryly. "Have fun you two."

"Bye Harry," Ron said quietly. "Let's just keep all this between the two of us eh' mate?"

"It's none of my business," Harry agreed.

"Thanks Harry," Hannah called out to Harry's retreating back.

"Yeah, thanks mate." Ron agreed.

Harry was just turning the corner to his sleeping quarters when he ran into another person out late at night.

"May I have a moment of your time Mr. Potter?" Professor Sprout was standing in Harry's path.

"Depends on what you want it for," Harry said slowly. "May I ask how you knew that I'd be around here at this time of night?"

"I had Hufflepuff house out looking for you," Sprout admitted. "I needed to talk with you and I wanted to talk to you before the other Professors got a chance to."

"Hannah?" Harry grinned.

"She said she saw you coming this way," Professor sprout agreed. "Harry . . . may I call you Harry?"

"You may," Harry replied.

"I wanted to talk to you about your lesson," Sprout said nervously. "You showed a very Hufflepuff attitude when you talked about dieing for your friends."

"Dieing for a friend is easy," Harry said in a whisper. "Killing for a friend is a bit more difficult, especially when one grows up in the same society that we did. I wanted them to understand how serious things were."

"I understand that," Professor Sprout said quickly. "I just wanted to tell you how much I appreciate the fact that you were willing to teach my students such a difficult lesson. Our house prizes loyalty, the first years get told stories about great acts of loyalty. They hear about how this wizard gave blood to his friend or how this witch died for hers . . . until now, they haven't told so many stories about how people killed for their friends. You helped them to understand the personal

sacrifice needed to be able to do such an act. Thank you Mr. Potter, on behalf of all Hufflepuffs I thank you for this lesson to my house."

"I didn't expect that," Harry said slowly. "I expected that the staff would not be happy with my little lesson, thank you for understanding."

"Would you mind allowing a few more students into your club?" Sprout asked quickly, "I think that all of my house members could benefit from your instruction."

"I'm afraid that I might get spread too thin if that happened," Harry said after a moment of thought. "Would it be possible for the Hufflepuffs that are already members of the club to teach their house mates what they've learned?"

"It will be possible," Sprout agreed. "Would you mind allowing me to sit in on a few of your lessons? I am a Professor and I think that it might help if I were able to help my students bring back your lessons."

"I am Happy to help Professor," Harry replied. "And if you wish to sit in on my lessons then you are welcome to come, would you be willing to help students from the other houses?"

"This is not the time for silly house rivalries, I shall help anyone that needs it." Sprout said firmly, "regardless of what house they entered in their first year."

"Thank you Professor."

"Thank you Harry." Sprout took a deep breath, "some of the other Professors aren't as . . . understanding as I am."

"I understand." Harry held up a hand, "I expect that I'll be having a few more talks about my actions and I doubt that they will be half as pleasant as this one was."

"I'm glad you thought things through," Sprout said with undisguised relief. "Goodnight Harry."

"Good night Professor."

IIIIIIII

"Percy," Penelope called out as her lover walked through the door. "I was so worried when you didn't come home."

"I was too," Percy took the girl into his embrace. "I thought I was going to be killed."

"What happened?" Penny refused to let go.

"I was captured by two men," Percy replied. "They gave me Veritaserum and asked me a bunch of questions about you and the baby."

"What did you tell them?" Penny asked nervously.

"Just that you existed," Percy assured the girl. "I managed to keep from telling them anything important. I'm not sure what happened after that but I had a short talk with one of Mr. Black's people, she told me that they would be willing to take you some place safe."

"I don't want to leave you," Penny said quietly. "We've already left our families, all we have is each other."

"I don't want to leave you either," Percy said quickly. "But I'm more afraid of losing you, I'm sure that we could work something out so that you'd be safe and we could be together."

"How are we going to do that?" Penny rested her head on Percy's shoulder.

"They did offer me a job working as an administrator for Black Ink." Percy said as he rubbed his lover's swollen belly. "I don't know what the pay would be . . . possibly lower than what I have now, but we'd be together."

"Accept it," Penny decided the matter. "We don't need much and we'll be together and safe."

"I'll make the call tomorrow morning," Percy replied after a moment of thought. "Maybe we can settle things with our parents after we're safe."

|||||||

Harry awoke early the next morning and quickly made his way to a less isolated part of the school. Whistling cheerfully as he entered the great hall, Harry was happy to see that he had the entire place to himself.

"Sneezy is very sorry sir," a strange house elf spoke up. "We did not think anyone would be up this early and we haven't put breakfast out yet."

"That's ok," Harry was quick to reassure the small elf. "Would it be possible to get something to eat now or is it better to come back later?"

"Sneezy will get you something now sir."

"Then could I have an egg and a couple pieces of bacon between two slices of toast?" Harry asked after a moment of thought, "something I can eat quickly."

"Yes sir," Sneezy snapped her fingers and Harry's sandwich appeared on the table. "Will that be all Sneezy can do for you sir?"

"Yes, thank you."

Harry was finishing his breakfast as the first few people began to arrive and he was almost out of the great hall when his Head of House managed to intercept him.

"May I have a moment of your time Mr. Potter?" McGonagall asked quickly.

"What can I do for you Professor?" Harry replied.

"The Headmaster would like to speak with you about your study group," McGonagall said evenly. "And Professor Hamilton has

expressed his worry that you aren't paying any attention in his classes."

"Oh?" Harry raised an eyebrow.

"Yes," Minerva confirmed. "He would also like to have a meeting with you."

"When am I supposed to do all this?" Harry sighed.

"You are excused from classes today," McGonagall explained. "The Headmaster thought it prudent to allow you time to contemplate what gets discussed."

"How thoughtful of him," Harry said flatly.

"If you would be so good as to honor an old woman's request." McGonagall fixed Harry with a sharp look. "Be good enough to come to my classroom after you've finished your meetings with the Headmaster and the Defence Professor, if I am currently in class please come in and attract my attention without making any noise so as not to disrupt the lesson."

"Alright Professor," Harry agreed. "If you want me to."

"Thank you Mr. Potter." Minerva dismissed her student with a fond smile, "I appreciate the fact that you're willing to humor me on this."

Harry made his way to the Headmaster's office and frowned when he realised that he had forgotten to ask for the password.

"Let me see," He mused to himself. "I seem to recall a spell for just this sort of situation . . . oh yes, Expositus."

Harry's spell caused the gargoyle to leap aside and he walked up the stairs to his meeting with Dumbledore.

"You asked to see me?" Harry asked calmly.

"Yes, have a seat." Dumbledore replied. "I wanted to speak with you about the meeting you conducted with your study group."

"What about it?" Harry had no intention of making this easy.

"I am somewhat troubled at your demonstration," Dumbledore said with a frown. "Was it necessary to make them believe that you had just killed several men?"

"Death is a necessary part of war," Harry rebutted. "And I wanted to make sure that they knew how serious things were."

"Yes but was it necessary to teach them that now?" Dumbledore asked quickly, "was it necessary show children such horrible things?"

"Yes," Harry replied firmly.

"Why?" Dumbledore begged, "can you make an old man understand?"

"Alright," Harry took a moment to think. "You did not end the reign of the last dark lord by hugging him did you? It required some very dangerous spells, do you dispute the fact that deadly spells are needed to resolve things in this instance?"

"No." Dumbledore shook his head, "I do not."

"So we have established that it is necessary to teach deadly spells." Harry nodded, "do you dispute the fact that deadly spells are deadly? That they should be used responsibly and with great care?"

"No I do not and I am quite glad to hear that we share that opinion," Dumbledore replied with a sad half smile.

"Good," Harry said. "Because now we get to the next part of my argument, could you conjure up a block of wood?"

"Of course," Dumbledore affirmed. The block appeared on the desk and Dumbledore looked regarded Harry with a look of expectation.

"It might be best if it were on the floor," Harry said as he moved the block. "Now watch closely . . . reductio."

"What was I supposed to see?" Dumbledore asked with a look of puzzlement.

"One moment." Harry conjured a leather bag and placed it on the remains of the shattered block of wood, "now compare what you just saw to this . . . reducto."

The bag exploded into a bloody mess and Harry let out a blood curdling scream to add to the effect.

"That was very interesting," Dumbledore cast several cleaning and repairing charms. "But if you would be so good as to get to the point."

"Which example gave you a better idea of what a reducto can do to a person?" Harry asked quietly.

"The second," Dumbledore replied. The old man was beginning to understand Harry's point.

"Now put yourself in the mindset of a young student, you've just learned this great new curse and you want to try it out." Harry began, "are you going to try it out on one of your friends after seeing what it did to that bag? I wanted them to know both the seriousness of what I was going to teach them and the dangers, I do not want any accidents that can be traced back to what they learned from me."

"Forgive me Harry." Dumbledore sank back into his chair. "I had doubted you, I can now see how your example has made the school safer. I am ashamed to admit that I had not thought of how dangerous a first year can be if they are not made aware of the power at the command of a wand flick."

"My example was worse then a bag exploding, you knew that the bag was dead . . . that it couldn't feel any pain. They had every reason to believe that those death eaters were real and they got a much stronger lesson." Harry said quickly. The boy took off his glasses and began to massage the bridge of his nose, "it had the added advantage of introducing them to battle without any danger. With any luck they'll be less likely to freeze up if they're thrown into the actual thing."

"I see . . . you have given me much to think about," Dumbledore said sadly. "Perhaps it is best that we get on to the other things I had hoped to discuss."

"What other things?"

"Sirius's will," Dumbledore replied. "He left everything to you, is there anything you would like to do with it at this time?"

"I'd like the books." Harry nodded, "could you have them brought here? Everything else can be dealt with later."

"Are you sure Harry?" Dumbledore asked quietly, "some of those books are rather dark."

"Better to know what I'm going up against," Harry countered.

"I suppose." The Headmaster slid an envelope across the desk, "your OWL scores."

Harry ripped open the envelope and spent a few seconds glancing over them, "better than I expected. Will that be all Professor?"

"Yes, thank you for your time Harry."

"Anytime Professor," Harry replied on his way out the door.

Harry left the Headmaster's office and made his way to his meeting with Professor Hamilton.

"Ah Harry," the Defence Professor greeted Harry in the hall outside the defence classroom. "Please come in."

"What did you want to meet with me about?" Harry asked quickly, wanting to get things done with as soon as possible.

"I've noticed that you don't seem to be paying attention in class," Hamilton replied. "And I was worried about that, could you tell me why you don't seem to be interested?"

"I already know most of what you're teaching at the moment," Harry answered. "And it can get a bit tedious to hear what you already know, I do listen in when you have something I haven't heard yet."

"I see . . . to be honest I was afraid that this might be the reason," Hamilton said slowly. "You are an exceptionally gifted student according to your grades and such students often have trouble focusing on things that are too easy for them. Do you have any solutions to this?"

"Would it be alright if I were to do a bit of self study in class?" Harry offered, "that way I can listen when you have something new and read ahead when you don't."

"I think that's an excellent solution," Hamilton agreed. "If I may ask you one more thing before you go?"

"What's that?"

"Would it be possible to sit in on one of your defence study group meetings?" Hamilton asked hopefully, "I've been asked by a few old friends to give a report on your skills and I would also like to see what you can do myself."

"I think that could be arranged," Harry agreed. "Good day Professor."

"Good day Mr. Potter," Hamilton bid farewell to his most gifted student.

Harry left the Defence classroom and began walking to his last meeting.

"It's like they're playing Harry pinball," he complained under his breath. "Every time I finish a meeting I get bounced to another."

Harry was whistling 'Pinball Wizard' when he reached the transfiguration classroom. Remembering his Professor's instructions, Harry quietly opened the door and slipped into the room.

"Thank you for joining us Mr. Potter," McGonagall called out. "If you would be so good as to come up here for a moment."

"Ok Professor," Harry agreed. Harry walked to the front of the room and stood next to his Head of House.

"Would you say that Transfiguration is a useful branch of magic Mr. Potter?" Minerva raised an eyebrow.

"Dead useful," Harry agreed.

"Why don't you give us a few examples?" Minerva suggested.

"Well, Animagus transformations can be useful for spying and for other reasons. A Metamorphmagus can also be used for spying and I guess that there are more mundane reasons that it would be useful to be able to change your appearance," Harry finished.

"How about dueling?" Minerva prompted.

"Oh yes," Harry said quickly. "Transfiguration can be dead useful in a duel if you use it right, takes a bit more thought then just flinging spells but it can be really effective."

"Thank you Mr. Potter," Minerva said smugly. "I want two feet by the end of the week on possible uses of transfiguration in a duel and you are not to cheat by asking Mr. Potter . . . class dismissed." Minerva gave a satisfied smile as the students rushed out of the room. "Thank you Mr. Potter, I'd wager that your little presentation has done more to boost the popularity of my class then anything I've done in the last few years."

"What did you want to speak with me about Professor?"

"I wanted to give you a bit of perspective," Minerva replied. "I would imagine that Albus attempted to fill your head with noble ideas of redemption and how good will always triumph in the end."

"He might have said something like that," Harry agreed.

"I want you to know that those are wonderful ideals to have, but that they might not be the best ideals to hold in dark times like this." McGonagall sighed, "war is a terrible thing Mr. Potter and in my life I have seen two . . . three if you count this latest one. I would advise

you to stay realistic and grounded while there is still the possibility of attack. If you must follow Albus's ideals it might be best to wait until things have quieted. Albus is a good man but . . ."

"But he doesn't live in the same world that we do," Harry suggested.

"Yes that's it exactly," Minerva agreed. "I want you to understand that I am not trying to downplay Albus's ideals, they are quite noble and they are probably the best to hold in times of peace. The problem is that we are not in a time of peace."

"Thank you Professor." Harry was touched that his Head of House would take the time to tell him this, "was there anything else you wished to talk about?"

"How did your meeting with the Defence Professor go?" Minerva asked mildly.

"It went ok, he said that I could study other things when he's talking about something I already know."

"I imagine that it must be difficult to sit through such a basic class, especially given the way he's chosen to teach it." McGonagall took a deep breath. "What you have to understand is that many students will pay more attention when they're given an example of someone that they admire who uses the things that are being taught. That is why I chose to have you give a few examples to my transfiguration class, those students will have realised how useful my class is because they have your example. It is the same in Defence, most of the students will show greater belief in the effectiveness of the spells and tactics because they were used by Mr. Black."

AN: Well, I hope that people understand the last bits where I explained why Defence has turned into the History of Mr. Black.

Omake: The History of Mr. Black

"Could someone tell me how Mr. Black has influenced the English language?" Professor Hamilton asked quietly.

"Black ops," one student called out. "Operations so dangerous and secret that they might have been done by Mr. Black."

"Black Projects," another student added. "Such as the Nuklar boom. Things that were created by or for Mr. Black."

"Men in Black," one of the muggle born students yelled. "Secret agents that dress in black and conceal the existence of UFOs."

"That's crazy," Professor Hamilton frowned.

"And . . . um . . . they work for Mr. Black?"

"AH, twenty points." Professor Hamilton agreed, "if they work for Mr. Black then it must be true."

OMAKE by Hebi R.

Ron and Hermione watched as Harry spoke into a Zippo lighter. A Nundu wearing a strange collar fell from above, and proceeded to maul the Death Eaters before them.

"Should we start asking questions now?" Hermione asked.

"No, Harry's perfectly fine." Ron replied.

IIIIIIIIII

"Can we question him now?" Hermione asked, watching Harry walk out into a blizzard without a coat in order to fend off the attacking yetis.

"Harry will be fine, Hermione." Ron replied, taking another sip of his hot chocolate.

IIIIIIIIII

Hermione gulped, watching as Harry ignore the many bites inflicted upon him by Voldemort's werewolf troops, and cut them down with a small knife. "Ron, don't you think we should-"

"There is nothing wrong with Harry! I don't understand why you are so upset!" Ron cut her off, staring at the pile of broken vampire bodies piled up next to him. He munched contentedly on ice mice.

OMAKE: by Steve2
In Chapter 24, Harry, not reluctantly one might add, went away with the veela's. In short order, they escorted him back to a stately manor.

"'arrie," started Gabrielle's cousin, "what weel you be doing now?"

Several of the veelas already thought they knew what he wanted and started removing extra clothes – shoes first to start.

"Well, I'm on vacation and I'm looking for a good time," Harry replied innocently. Or as innocently as any teenager can be.

Veela's #2 and 3 winked at each other and started removing their socks as well.

"What kind of good time, 'arrie?"

Harry smiled nervously, unsure if he should take his shoes off as well. "Um, well... it's something I've never done and I've always wanted to do it."

Most of the remaining veela nodded to the others and all the remaining shoes came off, stacked neatly near the door. No sense getting the furniture dirty with shoe prints as they always say.

"What 'ees eet you want, 'arrie?" came the husky reply.

"I've always... no, you'll think it's silly."

That got their attention. "What, 'arrie? We won't think it's silly. Lots of men say those things." As she said that, her shoes came off as well.

"Okay," Harry shrugged. "Well... I've always wanted to play Monopoly. I've seen it played a couple times by my cousin, his royal Lard-ass... er, excuse my French."

“He was speaking French?” asked veela #4.

“Let me get this straight,” Gabrielle’s cousin said, all the other veela watching on in interest as well. “You are in a large manor, no parents around, with a dozen of-age veela not wearing any shoes and you want to play Monopoly?”

Harry nodded. “Or Clue. I wouldn’t mind playing that either if you don’t have Monopoly. I’ve never played it so I’m wondering what I’m missing.”

A dozen smiles hit him at once. “You want to play a game? A board game? Oh, ‘arrie, we could kiss you!”

“But we won’t because it is not in the rules,” said veela #2, putting the Monopoly game on a table where the young wizard and dozen veela proceeded to set up their pieces.

Later, much later

Stifling a yawn, Harry asked, “When do we take a break? I’m getting tired. We’ve been at this for the past 13 hours.”

“If you admeet defeat, you can go upstairs and go to bed,” said veela #3. “Otherwise, you must continue playeeng. It says so een the rules.”

“It does?”

“You can’t read French, can you?” said veela #4.

“Well... normally no, but...”

“Then oui, eet states that een the rules,” relied veela #4.

“Darn. Well... how about some firewhiskey to get this game more lively?” Harry was, after all, a little thirsty from playing such an active game. Who knew Monopoly had all these rules about landing on properties with hotels on them meant having to perform some sort of physical activity to get out of paying the fines.

Veela #2 smiled and said, "Okay, rule #435 states that if the person with the Top Hat piece asks for firewhiskey, then the liquor must be made available and a kiss on the cheek from every available veela must be given. Sorry, 'arrie, but it's in the rules."

Harry responded, after getting a dozen kisses on the cheek (and a few near-misses that landed on his lips), "Is there anything in there about trying butterbeer?"

Later, much later again

"So what you're saying," Harry started, "is that since we have a stalemate on Monopoly, we can bridge the impending financial crisis by running a sea battle to claim victory?"

"Oui."

"And the name of this game?"

"Battleship, 'arrie."

"Any way to tie in the names of the properties we don't want to the names of the ships so that when they go down, the properties free up and we can resume playing?"

Veela #5 smiled and said, "'arrie has stumbled on the secret code of the day. Rule #654. Another round of kisses on the cheek, girls!"

Later, much later yet again

"Well, girls, I can't tell you how much fun I've had these last few days playing Monopoly, Battleship, Clue, Risk, Candyland, and all the others. I wish I could stay here and play all summer but these game rules are tough. I mean, I haven't slept in days. Thank god for Pepper-Up potions."

"But, 'arrie, you could've slept weeth us any time you wanted to," Veelas #6 and 7 said in unison (they were twins), and very suggestively.

"Thanks, girls, but we were all having such a good time playing I didn't want to let any of you down. But now I have to get back to my vacation and get some rest. Thank you for inviting me to stay. I had a wonderful time. I'll treasure this forever."

Sniff, teared up the assembled veela. What a nice boy.

"Say, I just noticed your overhead porch light is out. Do you want me to fix it?"

"Oh, don't you worry about it, 'arrie. We weel seemply get the aging old gardener to feex it next time he comes by. It ees only 15 meters off the ground."

"Oh, no trouble at all. You get a replacement bulb and I'll just get this rickety, old, wobbly ladder in place and see if we can't change the light bulb."

"Two francs says he falls by the time he gets to the fifth rung," veela #8 said to #9.

"I theenk he'll get the job done and not fall unteel coming down the ladder."

"Can any of you girls hold the ladder please? It is a little unsteady," Harry said from the top of the ladder, already unscrewing the light bulb.

"Sorry, 'arrie. But we're not wearing any shoes," murmured the assembled veela, rushing to now get their shoes on. Shoes were important. Especially when going outside in the dirty outdoors.

Alas, they were too slow in getting their shoes on.

Marriage Vows

"Welcome," the Professor called out as Percy and Penny arrived. "To Mr. Black's currently nameless fortress on his currently nameless island. Are you the new administrator?"

"Yes," Percy replied hesitantly. "I think so, I'm really not sure what the Doctor wanted me to do."

"Then you are the new administrator. Your code name is . . . the Pencil Pusher." The Professor said proudly, he'd spent seconds of valuable time coming up it.

"Um . . . can't I just be Percy?"

"Fine," the Professor sulked. "You can just be Percy . . . who's the lovely girl?"

"This is Penny," Percy said. His face unconsciously going into a smile at the mention of his lover.

"Are you an administrator too?" The Professor asked nervously.

"I can be," Penny agreed.

"Damn . . . I only thought of the one code name . . . would the two of you mind sharing that code name?" The Professor said quickly, "one of you can be Pencil and the other can be pusher?"

"Why don't we talk about the details later," Penny suggested. "And why don't you show us to our quarters now?"

"I suppose that could work," the Professor agreed. "If I knew where your quarters were . . . Henggirl."

"What?" Henggirl stuck her head into the room and scowled.

"Where are the Pencil and the Pusher's quarters?" The Professor yelled back.

"Who?" Henggirl shouted, "what have you done now you idiot?"

"Idiot?" The Professor screamed back, "would an idiot have invented a steam powered automatic hair brush?"

"Yes," Henggirl ended the argument with her simple reply. "No go away and let me deal with the mess that I'm sure you've made of things."

"Fine," the Professor agreed. Percy and Penny watched in shock as the two strange people argued and again as the little man stormed off.

"Hello," Henggirl said pleasantly. "I'm Henggirl, who are you?"

"I'm Percy and this is Penny," Percy replied dully. What had he gotten his family into?

"When are you going to have your baby?" Henggirl asked. She had finally noticed Penny's swollen belly and had gone in to investigate. "I just love babies."

"So do I," Penny agreed. "I can't wait to have this one."

"You must be tired," Henggirl said suddenly. "Let's get you to your quarters so that you can rest."

"That sounds like it would be a good idea," Penny said with a shrug. She was starting to get an understanding of these . . . people. "Come along dear."

Henggirl led the young couple down a wide hall and to the residential section of the fortress.

"Here's your rooms," Henggirl waved to a nondescript door. "It'll only let you and your child in, no one else can get access to your rooms."

"Thank you," Penny said with a grateful smile. "Is there a floor connection?"

"For calls only," Henggirl confirmed. "We don't want anyone to come in except through the appropriate entrances."

"Thank you," Penny replied.

"Would it be possible for me to make a quick trip back to England?" Percy asked nervously, "the Doctor said that we could have our wedding here and I wanted to invite my family personally."

"You haven't had your wedding yet?" Henchgirl asked with a maniacal gleam in her eye.

"No," Percy said sadly. "I filed the paperwork but we haven't had a ceremony."

"Yay, I always wanted to help plan a wedding." Henchgirl said cheerfully. "You go do whatever you need to do in England, Penny and I will start planning the wedding."

"Are you sure?" Percy asked quickly.

"Yeah," Henchgirl replied quickly. "Go."

"Alright then," Percy agreed. As he left the room he thought he heard Henchgirl say something about a rocket powered wedding dress but he must have heard that wrong . . . right?"

Percy retraced his steps back to the gate room where he and his soon to be bride had arrived just minutes before and found himself at a loss as to what to do next.

"Hello?" He called out.

"Yes, what can I do for you?" The Professor replied.

"I need a round trip portkey to England," Percy said quietly. "Can I arrange that here?"

"Of course you can," the Professor agreed. "Any particular part of England."

"My parent's house," Percy said.

"Here you are." The Professor tossed a small wooden rod. "Have fun."

"Thank you," Percy said as he took the rod. "How do I activate it?"

"It'll activate on it's own in a few seconds," the Professor said with a smile. "To get back just say Fortress."

"Thank you." Percy felt the tug and reappeared in front of the house where he'd grew up. Taking a deep breath, Percy walked up to the front door and knocked.

"Yes?" Molly answered the door, her heart froze when she saw her estranged son. "Percy?"

"Hello mum," Percy said in a subdued voice. "I . . . can I come in?"

"Of course," Molly said quickly. "This is still your house too."

"I'm sorry mum," Percy said quickly. "I came here to tell you that and to invite you to my wedding."

"Wedding?" Molly replied, her heart filled with hope.

"Penny and I already filed the paperwork but we haven't had a ceremony," Percy explained. "We're also going to have a baby soon and I thought you might like to come, I understand if you don't though."

"Of course I want to come," Molly said quickly. "I'm so glad to have you back."

"I'm not back mum," Percy said quietly. "That's why we're having the wedding, we found someplace safe to live."

"Safe?" Molly blinked, "does this have something to do with why you left?"

"Yes mum," Percy replied nervously. "I distanced myself from you and dad because I was afraid of what might happen to Penny. I did some research and I found that Ministry families that didn't take any part of things on either side in the last war stayed safe. I'm sorry mum but I gave up my family to keep my new family safe. I just wasn't brave enough to risk my wife and child, if it was just me I'd have stayed but it wasn't just me."

"You must think I'm a horrible mother," Molly whispered.

"Why would I think that mum?" Percy asked in confusion.

"You left the fight because it would keep your new family safe," Molly replied quietly. "Arthur and I jumped in without even thinking about the cost to you children."

"Everyone is at school or out of the house," Percy said quickly. He just had to think something that would calm his mother. "It's a completely different situation, if anyone is a terrible person it's me. I abandoned you and the fight because I couldn't stand the thought of coming home to a dead family and was willing to do anything to keep that from happening."

Far from their intended purpose calming his mother, Percy's statement just caused his mother to start crying. "My babies, I'm so sorry." Molly sobbed.

"Mum . . . don't cry," Percy said frantically. His usual way of dealing with Penny wouldn't work in this situation. The very thought of snogging his mother until they both forgot what they had been talking about turned his stomach. Running to the fireplace, Percy tossed in a handful of floo powder and called his father. "Dad, you there?"

"Percy?" Arthur's face appeared in the fireplace, "why haven't you come in to work? They say you've resigned and I've been getting odd floo calls from your girlfriend's family, are you ok son?"

"I'm fine dad," Percy confirmed. "But you need to come home."

"Why?" Arthur's voice turned serious, "what happened?"

"I came home to tell mum about my wedding and to apologize and she started talking about what a terrible mother she was," Percy said quickly. "I tried to tell her that she wasn't and she started crying and now I don't know what to do."

"Just stay there son," Arthur commanded. "I'll be through in a bit."

"Hurry," Percy begged. "I don't know what to do."

"I just have to take care of a few things," Arthur said calmly. "I'll be there in a minute." Arthur pulled his head out of the fireplace and mulled over what he'd just heard. On the one hand, Percy was his son. On the other . . . on the other, the boy had distanced himself from his family. As much as he hated to admit it . . .

Arthur took a pinch of floo and tossed it into the fireplace to call his older sons.

"What is it dad?" Charlie answered the floo.

"Can you get in touch with Bill?" Arthur asked quickly.

"Yeah he's right here, why?" Charlie replied with a nervous frown.

"I need the both of you to wait a few minutes and then go home," Arthur said. "There might be something wrong."

"We'll go over right now," Charlie said quickly.

"No," Arthur ordered. "Wait for five minutes and then go, I just have a bad feeling and I think it's best to be careful."

"What's happening?" Charlie demanded.

"Percy called me and he says that your mother is crying," Arthur answered. "I'm just worried about why she might be happening and what might be happening, I'm sure everything is fine."

"Like you said, better safe than sorry." Charlie pursed his lips. "Ok dad, we'll be over in a few minutes."

"Thanks boys," Arthur said with a smile. "If nothing is wrong then let's just say that I asked you to come because I thought it would help calm your mother."

"Then why not call the twins too?" Charlie asked, "just wanna keep our stories straight."

"When have they ever calmed your mother?" Arthur grinned, "and they're busy with their shop right now."

"Got it," Charlie said quickly. "Good luck dad."

"Thanks boys," Arthur said in reply and ended the call. Pulling his head out of the fireplace, Arthur checked his wand to make sure it was readily available and then with one last sigh . . . Arthur popped back home to meet his fate.

"Dad," Percy called out to his father when he heard the pop. "I'm so glad you're here."

"It's ok son," Arthur said with a smile. "I'm here now."

"Arthur," Molly flung herself on her husband and buried her face in his shoulder.

"Now why don't you tell me what happened?" Arthur suggested.

"I came home to apologize and to invite everyone to my wedding," Percy said quickly. "Then mum asked if I was going to come home and I said that we were safe so I was just going to have a wedding and we'd stay where we were."

"Where did you go?" Arthur asked calmly. "What else happened?"

"I got a new job dad," Percy said quickly. "And I'm not sure if I'm supposed to talk about it yet. Mum asked why I left and I told her it was because they didn't bother Ministry families that stayed out of things last time and because I was too cowardly to face the possibility of coming home and finding Penny and the baby dead and that's when she said that she was a horrible mother and started crying." Percy took a deep breath.

"I think I understand," Arthur said slowly. "Why don't you go wait in the sitting room for your brothers, I'll do my best to calm your mother and then the five of us can visit."

"Great idea dad," Percy said enthusiastically. "Thanks for coming . . . can I talk to you about being a father later? Penny and I are expecting."

"I'd be happy to talk to you about that Percy," Arthur's voice was choked with emotion.

|||||||

It was the bottom of the ninth and the bases were loaded . . . or they would be if it was a baseball game instead of a Quidditch game so no bases were loaded and the snitch had yet to be caught. It was the Gryffindor match against their arch rivals Slytherin and the score was tied at one hundred and fifty.

Ginny was in her element, the cheers of the crowd had faded to a dull roar in the back of her mind and a flicker of gold to her left indicated that the game might soon be over. Ginny turned her head to focus on the snitch and made a mad dash across the field to end the game. Taking her hand off the broom in anticipation of her victory, she smiled as the snitch got closer and closer. She was about three broom lengths away from the snitch when a light flashed behind her eyes and the world went black.

Goyl grinned stupidly at his beater bat still coated with a thin layer of his victim's blood. The slow witted boy ignored the screams of the crowd and the instructions of the referee . . . all that mattered is that he had followed Draco's instructions and won the game for Slytherin.

"What are you going to do about this?" Ron demanded. He felt sick to his stomach as he watched his younger sister get carried off the field.

"That was some of the dirtiest play that I have ever had the misfortune to watch," Madame Hooch replied in disgust. "But the league rules are very clear in regards to the penalty I am aloud to give in this sort of situation . . . three penalty shots."

"What?" Ron screamed in outrage. "You're letting them off?"

"I don't have a choice in this matter Mr. Weasley," Madame Hooch said in disgust. "I suggest that you call in an alternate seeker?"

"Fine," Ron growled. "But this isn't over."

Ron flew his broom to the Quidditch stands to find his two best friends.

"What did Hooch say?" Harry asked calmly.

"Penalty shots," Ron said with a shake of his head. "She said that she couldn't do anymore."

"You want me to come in?" Harry raised an eyebrow.

"Yeah mate," Ron agreed. "After all that, there's no way I'm gonna let those dirty snakes win."

"You grab my broom," Harry commanded. "I'm gonna toss a uniform over this and be down shortly."

"Right," Ron agreed. The red headed boy flew his broom to where his sister had landed and picked Harry's broom up off the ground. "Guess it's a good thing Harry let you use his broom Gin," Ron muttered to himself. "We'll get 'em for you."

Shaking his head to banish the disturbing thoughts that threatened to take over, Ron made the short flight to the side lines where his friend was waiting.

"Thanks," Harry said with a grateful nod as he took his broom. "Let's get this over then."

The two boys flew up to meet the rest of the team and Harry put hovered across from the opposing seeker.

"Looks like we're gonna watch two seekers get carried off the field in one game," Draco said in his usual tone. "A rare treat huh boys?"

Harry's only outward reaction to the other boy's mocking words was a small grin.

"I don't want to see anymore dirty play in this game." Madame Hooch glared at the Slytherin team. "Play has resumed."

Harry accelerated across the field with Draco at his heels with a grin on his face. He got to the end of the pitch then whirled to face the other seeker.

The Slytherin boy didn't have time to react to Harry's change in direction before Harry's boot smashed him across the face and threw him to the ground.

A hush fell over the arena and all eyes turned to stare at Harry as he sat calmly on his boom.

"Guess we owe them a penalty shot then," Harry said in an unemotional voice. His face was impassive as he watched Malfoy get carried off the field.

"Err . . . yes, two shots." Hooch managed to overcome her shock to make the call.

"Bloody hell mate," Ron whispered at his friend.

"Who do you think'll get out of the hospital wing first?" Harry smiled at the listening Slytherins. "I'm guessing Ginny, I think I felt a couple teeth break when I hit Malfoy."

"If he gets out first then I guess we can just put him back," Ron replied with a grin. Sure that his friend was putting on a show.

"Best get back to your post mate," Harry suggested. "Looks like they found someone to replace Malfoy and it's time for those shots."

"Right mate," Ron agreed.

"Relax," Harry told the trembling first year that had been thrown in as Malfoy's last minute replacement. "If you play clean with me then I will play clean with you, if you want to play dirty . . ."

"I'll behave," the firsty said quickly. "Thank you."

"The thing about the houses," Harry continued. "Is that they don't really matter in the real world. Malfoy is a git, I am not going to treat

you like him if you don't act like him . . . that goes for everyone in your house."

"I'll tell them," the firsty assured Harry.

"Would you like a little piece of advice?" Harry glanced behind the first year. "Something to make you a better seeker?"

"What?" The first year asked quickly.

"Keep your head on a swivel," Harry said with a smile. "You never know where the snitch will turn up."

The first year's head turned by reflex and his eyes widened when he noticed the snitch hovering just out of reach. Making a last minute lunge, the Slytherin seeker was beaten out at the last minute by the longer arms of his more experienced opponent.

"Good job," Harry spoke out of the corner of his mouth as the two neared the ground. "Better then Draco ever did but that might be because he had to buy his way onto the team."

IIIIIIIIII

The after game party in the Gryffindor party was a bit more subdued then it normally was. One of their own was in the hospital wing and it dampened everyone's spirits when that happened . . . unless it was Harry, he spent so much time in the hospital wing that people started getting nervous when he managed to stay out of it for more then a coupe months.

All eyes turned to look at the portrait when in opened and most of them widened in shock when Ginny walked into the room.

"Why aren't you in the hospital wing?" Ron demanded.

"Madame Pomfrey said that I'd be fine after a little rest," Ginny replied with a grin. "So I told her that I'd be able to rest in my own bed better then I would in the hospital wing."

"She bought that?" Ron asked in shock, "I wonder why Harry never tried that."

"She thinks Harry's made of glass and she doesn't like it when he's out of her sight," Hermione spoke up. "Speaking of Harry . . . where is he? I haven't seen him since the game."

"Um." Ginny looked nervous. "Harry hasn't been here?"

"No, why?" Hermione asked.

"Because Malfoy's goons are in the hospital wing," Ginny answered reluctantly. "Madame Pomfrey says that it looked like they'd fallen down a flight of stairs . . . are you sure you haven't seen Harry?"

"Not since the game," Hermione confirmed. "But I wouldn't worry about it, Harry wouldn't do something like that."

"Yeah," Ron agreed quickly. "Now get off to bed or I'll go down to the hospital wing to tell Madame Pomfrey that you've been up and about."

"Just let me grab a few snacks to take with me," Ginny agreed. "And I'll go right up."

"We'd better go make our rounds," Hermione suggested. "Let's go Ron."

"Good idea," Ron replied quickly. "Let's go."

The two friends walked into the hall and down the corridor.

"I don't see anyone," Ron said quietly.

"Do you really think that Harry put Malfoy's bodyguards in the hospital?" Hermione asked nervously.

"Maybe," Ron said after a few moments of thought. "I would have said no last year . . . or at least not without asking for our help. Hell, last year it would have been me asking for help and you helping Harry talk me down."

"But he's changed over the summer," Hermione spoke quietly. "And I'm not sure if it was for the better . . . he's so distant."

"Give him time," Ron whispered. "I think . . . I think that he might be trying to work through Sirius's death, maybe Cedric's too."

"What can we do?" Hermione was close to tears. "I'm watching him slip away from us and I don't know what to do."

"I don't know either," Ron admitted. "But I don't think demanding answers will help . . . you know how he can get."

"Yes I know how he can get," Hermione growled. "I think I know why Harry's acting the way he is lately."

"Really?" Ron asked quickly. "Why?"

"I bet that git is trying to protect us," Hermione spoke through clenched teeth. "He thinks we're targets for being his friends and he's trying to distance himself to protect us. That stupid git, what gives him the right to do this to us?"

"You could be right," Ron agreed. "You heard how he reacted in the Department of Mysteries when he thought you were dead, add that to what happened to Sirius . . ."

"That Bloody Bastard." Hermione was working herself into a rage, "what gives him the right to make our decisions for us."

"Same thing that gives everyone else to make his decisions for him," Ron suggested. "And need I remind you that our hands aren't clean in this matter?"

"I know," Hermione groaned going from rage to depression in an instant. "We never should have listened when they told us not to give Harry any news . . . what do we do Ron?"

"I don't know," Ron said quietly. "You're supposed to be the smart one, I don't think we should push him on this though."

"It would only make him dig his heels in," Hermione agreed. "He can be so stubborn sometimes. Ok, here's what I think we should do. We should remind Harry that we'll follow him everywhere and tell him how confident we are in his leadership skills."

"Sounds good," Ron said quickly. "Now let's get back to the party."

IIIIIIII

Ron awoke the next morning and walked down to the common room to find Hermione waiting.

"Good morning," Ron greeted his friend with a smile.

"Is Harry awake yet?" Hermione demanded.

"I didn't see him in his bed," Ron said. "I assumed he was down here."

"I've been down here waiting for him for the last two hours," Hermione said. "I know he didn't get past me."

"He wakes up early sometimes," Ron explained with a shrug. "Especially after he gets back from summer holiday."

"Oh . . . come on, we have to go find him so we can start reassuring him that we'll always be by his side." Hermione dragged Ron out of the common room and to the great hall, "I was thinking that I'd focus on telling him what a great leader he is while you focus more on the loyalty and friendship." Hermione suggested, "with any luck we'll have Harry back to normal before Christmas."

"Ms. Granger, Mr. Weasley." McGonagall intercepted the duo at the entrance to the main hall. "May I have a moment of your time? I have a bit of news for the two of you."

"What can we do for you Professor?" Hermione asked.

"You two have been excused from classes to attend the wedding of one of Mr. Weasley's brothers," McGonagall replied. "Mr. Weasley's

mother also made it a point of telling me that she would like Mr. Weasley to bring his girlfriend along."

"What about Harry?" Ron asked, "and Ginny?"

"I have already informed Mr. Potter and I shall tell your sister when she comes down for breakfast," McGonagall said. "If there are no more questions?"

"Which Brother?" Hermione asked quickly.

"Percy," McGonagall spoke quickly. "And Mr. Weasleys other brothers have asked me to instruct him that if he does not attend then they shall be forced to break both of his legs. Apparently there are some things that must be resolved in a face to face meeting. Anything else?"

"No Professor." Ron shook his head.

"Be in the great hall at the start of classes, there will be a Portkey to take you to your location." Minerva instructed. The Transfiguration mistress gave each student a fond smile and then returned to her place at the head table.

"Girlfriend?" Hermione gave Ron an odd look.

"Sort of." Ron's face reddened to match his hair. "Hanna and I have been talking to each other this summer. Sorry I haven't said anything but I wanted to keep it to myself for a while."

"She's nice," Hermione said after a moment of thought. "I think she'll be good for you."

"Thanks," Ron said with a shy grin. "I'm glad you think so."

"Let's go find Harry," Hermione suggested.

"Yeah," Ron agreed.

Ron and Hermione were soon joined by Ginny. The three of them searched the Great Hall all morning in vain and finally gave up as breakfast was coming to a close.

"Where is he?" Hermione frowned. "Nobody's seen him since the game."

"McGonagall said she'd told him to come down here," Ron said nervously. "Do you think we should go looking for him?"

"Professor," Ginny called out as their Head of House entered the room. "Have you seen Harry?"

"Yes," Minerva replied. "I just spoke with him, he said that he just wanted to grab a few things and that he'd be right down."

"I'm here Professor," Harry called out. "Sorry I took so long."

"Quite alright Mr. Potter," Minerva said. The old woman pulled out a long strip of ribbon and held it out. "The portkey is this strip of ribbon, it is set to go off when you say the words Wedding and Percy's in the opposite order. Before you go, there is something I need to warn you about."

"What's that Professor?" Hermione asked nervously.

"The ceremony itself is being conducted in Mr. Black's home," Minerva said. "So I would not advise you to go wandering off or to break anything."

"What?" The four students asked in shock.

"I'm told that all will be explained when you arrive," Minerva said as she handed over the ribbon. "I suggest that you use this portkey soon. You wouldn't want to be late would you?"

"Of course not Professor." Hermione took the ribbon and made sure that everyone had a hold. "Percy's wedding."

The Portkey trip was the longest that any of them had ever taken. They finally arrived in a dark stone room in front of an odd little man and a taller smiling girl.

"Hello," the tiny man called out. "I'm the Professor and this is my henchgirl . . . Henchgirl."

"Hello," Henchgirl waved.

"Hello again Professor," Hermione greeted the little man. "Nice to meet you Henchgirl."

"Is this really Mr. Black's home?" Ginny asked hesitantly.

"Why yes it is," the Professor replied.

"Is Mr. Black here?" Ron asked nervously.

"He could be," the Professor agreed. "One never knows."

"What do you mean by that?" Hermione asked, eager to learn as much about the mysterious Mr. Black as she could.

"Mr. Black could be anywhere," the Professor replied with a grin. "He could be standing right in front of you and you wouldn't know it unless he wanted you to."

"So he could be in this room right now?" Hermione looked around.

"He could be standing right next to you and you'd never know it," the Professor replied with a smirk.

"Could someone show me where the bathroom is?" Harry asked quickly. "I think I might be sick after that Portkey."

"Come with me," Henchgirl said with a perky smile. "I'll show you."

"Thanks," Harry replied gratefully and the two of them walked out of the room.

"So tell me," Henggirl asked after the two of them were out of earshot. "Do you really need the bathroom or did you just want to talk to me?"

"I don't get sick anymore," Harry replied. "Not since . . . and portkeys don't bother me after all the ones I used this summer."

"Why don't we go find someplace private," Henggirl suggested. "If anyone asks why it took so long, I took you to the hospital wing because I was worried about you or something."

"Sounds good," Harry agreed. "How has everyone been?"

"It's only been a couple weeks," Henggirl said with a grin.

"I know," Harry said. "But I've missed everyone."

"How's school?"

"Terrible," Harry said quickly. "I'm too bloody paranoid to sleep in my dorm, most of the classes are too easy, and Defence Against the Dark Arts has turned into The History of Mr. Black."

"Really?" Henggirl coughed to cover her laughter.

"Really," Harry confirmed. "I don't know if I can stay there all year, and I'm sure I can't stay for two."

"You'll manage," Henggirl said with a shrug. "And if you can't, you can always come back here."

"Why is Percy getting married here?" Harry asked, changing the subject.

"Because he works for you now," Henggirl replied.

"Ok . . .why is he working for me?" Harry asked in a low voice.

"Several reasons," Henggirl replied. "One of wich is that we owe him after what a couple of our agents did."

"What happened?"

"The twins decided that they needed to know why he left the family," Henghgirl whispered back. "Turns out he did it to protect his wife and unborn child."

"I suppose I can respect that," Harry agreed. "Why do we owe him?"

"The twins asked where his family was," Henghgirl replied. "So he bit through his tongue to keep from answering."

"I can respect that too," Harry said after a moment of thought. "Good work."

AN: McGonagall doesn't think that Harry is Mr. Black, she thinks that he's becoming an illegal animagus.

Omake by MisterQ

Deep underground, in the lowest level of Voldemort's hideout - er.. fortress, three deatheaters plotted.

"Every time the Dark Lord sends people after Potter, they get killed by Mr. Black. This can only mean one thing!" said the first Deatheater, "This means that Mr. Black is Harry Potter's real father! Lily must have kept her affair a secret from everyone but our Dark Lord. There is no way The Dark Lord would target a defenseless baby unless it was the spawn of Mr. Black himself!"

"That is stupid. Harry Potter is protected by Mr. Black because he needs to find out how to survive the killing curse. Once he figures it out, he will start the next phase in his plan for global domination." The second Deatheater nodded.

"Listen, you guys," the third Deatheater shivered in fear, "You two shouldn't talk about Mr. Black so casually. There is a rumor that he hears everything when people talk about him."

"Oh yeah, right! It's just a name!" The first minion rebutted.

"Yeah! Like Mr. Black is going to do something to us just because we're talking about him? Ha! I'd like to see that!" said the second

follower of Voldemort before he and the first one simply vanished - only to reappear with his friend, right in front of Harry Potter in the room of requirements.

The third Deatheater blinked and looked around the empty room. "Hello? You guys, this is not funn...y..."

His two friends reappeared.. or to say more accurately, the remains of his two friends reappeared. The lone Deatheater looked from one corpse that was missing a large portion of his chest to the headless other body and started screaming. He never stopped.

Two days later, Harry was walking past the Headmaster's office when he heard Snape talking to Dumbledore. "The latest news is that two Deatheaters simply vanished from You Know Who's most secure lair, only to reappear seconds later - dead. One of them looked like he got hit by a reducto curse point blank in the head. As you know, that is one of Mr. Black's favorite spells..."

The voices trailed off as Harry walked away thinking.

"So you're saying that Voldemort never found out about the Room of Requirements?" Ron asked Harry the next day as they stood in the very room they were talking about.

"That's right. I asked Ginny, and as far as she remembers, the young Tom Riddle never knew of this place as of the time he made that diary."

"So... the power that he knows not is.." Hermione started to say.

"Correct. This room." Harry said and faced skyward before speaking in an authoritative voice. "I really need the severed head of Tom Riddle, also known as Lord Voldemort... and also his right ventricle. My vampire side is feeling a little hungry."

It's a, Great Day For a, White Wedding

It was a bright sunny day that found the gathered Weasley clan with their assorted hangers on milling about behind their home in preparation for their trip.

"Does everyone have everything?" Molly called out as the group prepared to activate their portkey.

"Everyone looks ready mum," Charlie spoke up.

"Fred George?" Molly raised an eyebrow.

"We're fine mum," the twins agreed.

"Could you take a look at my hair?" Hannah asked quickly, "I think I've got it looking right but . . ."

"I'll take a look at it dear," Molly agreed.

"Thanks for letting me come with your group," Hannah said. "I can't believe I left my formal robes at home."

"No reason you should have taken them to Hogwarts with you," Molly said.

"I know, it's just . . . I feel like I should have been more prepared." Hannah replied.

"Is everyone here?" Arthur spoke up, noticing that his wife was distracted with some sort of mysterious female ritual.

"Yeah dad," Bill agreed. "We're all here."

"Then let's go," Arthur decided. "Everyone grab hold . . . wedding."

The portkey activated and the group felt themselves pulled south to the mysterious Mr. Black's island fortress.

The group landed in an empty room and looked around nervously, who knew what sort of dark creature might greet them.

"Hey mum," Ron called out from behind the group.

"Ron, Hermione, Ginny . . . where's Harry?" Molly asked with a frown, she had counted the children and found one missing. "Didn't he come?"

"He came," Ron confirmed. "But the portkey made him sick so he's in the bathroom or something."

"That poor dear," Molly said sympathetically. "Do you think I should go look after him?"

"He'll be fine mum," Ron said. "Someone's already looking after him."

"Well . . ." Molly pursed her lips.

"And we really should be getting to Penny," Hermione added. "Her mother hasn't gotten here yet and she doesn't have anyone to keep her company."

"She doesn't?" Molly frowned, "let's go attend my future daughter."

"Harry had better appreciate this," Hermione muttered as she followed Molly out of the room.

"What was that dear?" Molly asked.

"Just worrying about Harry," Hermione replied with a false grin.

"I'm sure he'll be fine," Molly said. "The important thing is that we get to Penny and make sure that she's ready for the wedding."

IIIIIIII

In another part of the fortress, Harry and Henggirl were relaxing over a warm mug of tea.

"So then he goes outside and sees all the yuki-onna sunbathing without any clothes on," Henggirl said with a suppressed laugh. "And I thought his head would explode, he just took a few deep breaths and came back inside. Then he turned to me and said . . . ok,

I take it back. I can see why Mr. Black is worshiped as a god of fertility."

"God of fertility?" Harry asked through wheezing laughter.

"Some town in Bulgaria," Henggirl replied. "Something about a pack of Veela . . . so, anything interesting happen to you?"

"Aside from finding out how the rest of the world saw my vacation?" Harry asked with a grin, "no. It's been great, nice and quiet."

"I heard something about a broken jaw?" Henggirl's nose scrunched up, "and some dead death eaters."

"I broke some idiot's jaw after he put Ginny in the Hospital," Harry said quickly. "And I don't think I really killed those death eaters, it was in the Room of Requirements so I'm not sure if they were really there."

"Room of Requirements?" Henggirl wanted clarification.

"It's a room in Hogwarts that provides anything you need," Harry explained. "You walk past it three times and think of what you need and a door appears."

"Oh . . . so you don't think it gave you real death eaters?" Henggirl said with a slow nod.

"No, no my life isn't that simple." Harry agreed, "I guess it wouldn't hurt to try it out."

"Would you mind taking a few magical readings with your Hex-Quarter?" Henggirl asked hopefully, "a room like that could be useful in the testing and prototype stages."

"Sure," Harry agreed. "I'll also see if I can't get the room to show me how it was made."

"Be sure to record anything it gives you," Henggirl said. "And I'll be sure to show the Architect your raw data."

"I just love the look he gets on his face when we show him new things to incorporate," Harry said with a grin.

"Looks like a child in a room full of Potions Texts," Henchgirl agreed.

"Right . . . any progress on spell book?" Harry asked.

"We've made some," Henchgirl agreed. "But there's something else I wanted to talk with you about."

"What's that?" Harry asked.

"The various Magical Law Enforcement agencies have been asking to send people to you for instruction," Henchgirl replied. "And they're offering to give anything to get it."

"I see . . . we might be able to use this," Harry said slowly.

"That was my thought," Henchgirl agreed. "But I wasn't sure how we could arrange things."

"Rather than me teaching them, why don't we have them teach each other?" Harry suggested. "We get each one to teach their spells and specialties."

"Kind of like a finishing school for the professionals," Henchgirl nodded. "But what happens when they've all taught each other?"

"It'll never happen," Harry said smugly. "Too many people and too many things to learn, tell them that I might drop in occasionally to teach something obscure like how to make an Atlantien omelet or to erect ancient Egyptian wards."

"But who knows," Henchgirl said getting into the spirit of things. "No one can predict when or if the mysterious Mr. Black might decide to show up and who knows what he might teach. I think teaching them to make an Atlantien omelet would be great, it'd really mess with their heads."

"Make sure everyone has a badge and everyone agrees to help if we ask for it," Harry continued. "Or if not a badge, something to blur their faces while they're here."

"Good idea," Henghgirl agreed. "That'd let you attend all the classes you want without anyone being the wiser."

"I try," Harry said with a blush.

"Any Problems with your equipment?" Henghgirl asked with a grin.

"Nope," Harry shook his head. "Everything is working the way it should . . . I think."

"Good," Henghgirl replied. "Can I see your motorcycle?"

"Sure," Harry agreed. "Why?"

"He's cute," Henghgirl said. "And I miss him."

"Cute?" Harry asked incredulously.

"Cute," Henghgirl confirmed. "Hasn't anyone ever told you that girls like horses?"

"I hadn't thought of that, how about I leave him here for a while so you can keep him company?" Harry suggested with a grin, "I'm not going to need him with me at Hogwarts."

"If you say so," Henghgirl agreed.

"I do," Harry said firmly.

"Do you mind if I name him?" Henghgirl asked hopefully.

"Sure," Harry said with a shrug. "If you like."

"Yay," Henghgirl cheered. "Thanks Harry."

"No problem," Harry said with a smile. "Whatever makes you happy."

"Should we head back to your friends now?" Henghgirl asked quietly.

"Is it time for the wedding?" Harry said as he checked his watch.

"No," Henchgirl shook her head. "We've still got a bit of time."

"Then I'd rather wait here with you," Harry replied. "They're my friends but . . ."

"I understand," Henchgirl said. "So tell me about your friends, I haven't had a chance to meet with them and I'd like to know what to expect."

IIIIIIIIII

The girls led Molly and Hannah down several halls to the rooms that had been set aside for Penny's use before the wedding.

"Penny," Molly called out as she entered the room. "Are you in here."

"Yes," Penny replied nervously. "Thank you for coming Mrs. Weasley."

"Call me Mum Penny dear," Molly pulled the younger woman into a hug. "You're part of the family now."

"I'm sorry," Penny said as tears began flowing down her cheeks. "Percy left because of me and I'm so sorry."

"There's nothing to be sorry about dear," Molly replied. "Now dry those tears and tell me when you're expecting my first grandchild to be born."

"Another month and a half," Penny replied with a bit of hesitation.

"That's wonderful," Molly said enthusiastically. "Would you like me to come down to keep you company when you get close?"

"I wouldn't want to be any trouble," Penny demurred.

"No trouble at all," Molly waved off her soon to be daughter in law's concerns. "With the children at school I just sit around the house all day, It'd be good to take care of someone again."

"You don't mind living in Mr. Black's fortress for a little while while you wait?" Penny asked. Color was starting to return to the girl's cheeks.

"Of course not," Molly replied. "I'm sure he's very nice when you get to meet him."

"What's he like?" Hannah overcame her shyness to ask the question that all the girls wanted to hear.

"I'm not sure," Penny replied. "I haven't met him yet, I don't think he's on the island."

"What's it like living here?" Hermione asked, "I heard that Mr. Black had the largest collection of Egyptian scrolls in the world."

"It's empty," Penny said with a smile. "There aren't too many people here right now so it can be a bit lonely."

"All the more reason for me to come down here," Molly interjected.

"Do you know if it's gonna be a boy or a girl?" Ginny asked quietly.

"No," Penny said quickly. "Percy and I wanted it to be a surprise."

Everyone looked up as the door opened again to admit an older version of Penelope.

"Are you in here Penny?" The distinguished looking woman called out.

"Mum?" Penny's voice choked up.

IIIIIIII

Harry watched as Henchgirl showered his motorcycle's horse form with attention.

"Mortis?" Harry asked incredulously. "Isn't that a bit redundant?"

"It's a cute name," Henchgirl replied quickly. "Don't you think so Mortis?"

The translucent stallion neighed in in agreement as it took a deep sniff of Henggirl's hair.

"See," Henggirl said triumphantly. "He likes it."

"Whateve . . . oh hell," Harry said.

"What is it?" Henggirl asked.

"You're supposed to give a wedding present at a wedding right?" Harry asked nervously.

"The Doctor took care of that," Henggirl replied. "Mr. Black got them some sort of hovering enchanted ball that will watch over and protect their baby."

"What about Harry Potter?" Harry said quickly.

"Harry Potter got them an everfull jar of milk, it has several settings and he thought it would be good for the baby and because he didn't know if there were cows on Mr. Black's island so he thought they might be able to use it," Henggirl said with a grin. "He picked it up on his vacation and if they try to trace it back they'll find that they can be bought in a small country town with a large dairy industry for a modest price."

"You guys think of everything don't you?" Harry asked with a smile.

"Yup," Henggirl agreed. "We've also slipped Hermione a book on useful house hold charms for child rearing to give and Ron a small training broom. They asked the Doctor about it and she told them that Harry had given passed off his gift and then worried that his friends might have forgotten. The Doctor worried that this might distress her patient and decided to resolve the matter. Poor Harry, worse case of Portkey sickness she'd ever seen."

"And they say I'm supposed to be the super spy," Harry said with a laugh.

"The Doctor said something about how an efficient support staff is essential to the success of your endeavors," Henggirl explained. "And then she started telling us what we should do."

"Oh," Harry said with a slow nod. "I guess that makes sense."

"That it does," Henggirl agreed with a glance at her watch. "We'd better start heading towards the chapel."

"There's a chapel here?" Harry asked.

"Sort of," Henggirl agreed with a shrug. "The Architect built one when he heard there was going to be a wedding, it'll shift itself to a dozen different forms depending on what sort of ceremony you want to have."

"He just wanted an excuse to do some more construction," Harry sighed. "Well . . . whatever makes him happy."

Harry and Henggirl walked down a long hallway and through a set of double doors and into what looked like a large reception and banquet hall.

"Who's going to perform the ceremony?" Harry asked as the approached a large group of people.

"There isn't going to be a ceremony," Henggirl replied. "They're already married, Mr. Black arranged all this so his friend from Shengri La could give a blessing to the young couple and so their families could have a chance to come see them."

"Shengri La?" Hermione croaked, "it's real?"

"Of course it is," Henggirl agreed. "You didn't think Mr. Black would ask the Lama of Shengri La to give his blessing if he didn't exist did you?"

"I ment that I thought Shengri La was a myth," Hermione explained.

"Well you were wrong," Henggirl replied. "They just like their privacy."

"Oh . . . and Mr. Black knows where it is?" Hermione asked, wanting to get as much information as possible.

"Of course he does," HENCHgirl said with a nod. "He spent a long time studying there."

"Feeling better Harry?" Hermione asked sympathetically, hoping to change the subject.

"Much," Harry answered. "I even got some stuff for my stomach that might keep me from being so sick after we return to Hogwarts."

"That's good," Hermione said happily. "Looks like things are starting."

An elderly man in a saffron robe entered the room and walked to the front of the crowd. Clearing his throat, the elderly man chanted a couple of sutras.

Percy then walked to his place in front of the old man and waited nervously for his bride.

Penny shot her husband a nervous smile as she walked up the isle to take her place by his side and the old monk began to talk.

"I have been asked to come here to give my blessings to this young couple by my good friend Mr. Black." The old man in the saffron robe said with a serene look on his face. "He told me of their great love for each other and how their devotion was so strong that they gave up everything to protect their unborn child. As you have already married in the eyes of the law, this will be short. Do you promise to show each other love and respect each other?"

"I do," Percy agreed.

"I do," Penny concurred.

"Then I have no reservations and I will grant you my blessing without further delay," the old monk said with a smile. The crowd watched as the old man chanted another sutra. After he finished, a large smile bloomed on the man's face. "Let me be the first to congratulate you and to wish you a long life of peace and happiness."

"Thank you," Penny replied quietly.

"Yes, thank you." Percy agreed.

The crowd cheered as Penny embraced her husband and captured his lips in a long kiss.

"What happens now?" Percy asked after managing to come up for air.

"We eat," the monk replied simply. "If we're following the tradition that I'm familiar with."

"That sounds fine," Penny gave her own opinion of the matter.

The crowd broke up and headed towards the food on the large tables around the perimeter of the room.

"What's this?" Ron asked as he ladled a strange looking food onto his plate.

"That?" The Professor glanced over, "is an Atlantean dish of somesort. I believe Mr. Black said that he got it from a chap named Myrddin."

"Myrddin?" Ron asked, pronouncing the strangely familiar name.

"Yes," the Professor agreed. "Mr. Black said that the poor bloke wasn't much of a wizard but that he had some good recipes."

"Oh," Ron replied.

"What are you eating Ron?" Hermione asked when she joined her friend. "Hello Professor."

"Hello Ms. Granger," the Professor replied with a smile.

"Some recipe from a guy named Myrddin," Ron replied as he shoved a great mass of it into his mouth. "It's good."

"Don't talk with your mouth full," Hermione scolded. "Myrddin?"

"According to Mr. Black," the Professor began. "While he wasn't much of a wizard, he was a decent cook."

"I'll say," Ron agreed.

"It can't be," Hermione gasped. "What else can you tell me about Myrddin?"

"Not much," the Professor replied. He loved doing this to people. "Mr. Black says that he was some snot nosed kid that was tossed out of Atlantis for being so underpowered, not a bad sort though and like I like I said a decent cook."

"What happened after that?" Hermione demanded.

"I don't know," the Professor said with a shrug. "I think he went to your part of the world, Mr. Black never said much about it one way or the other."

"But . . ." Hermione said dumbly.

"I think you fried her brain," Ron said happily. "I always wanted to see that happen."

"Yes . . . well, I can't imagine why she'd act like that." The Professor said innocently.

"Girls," Ron explained with a shrug. "Are strange and they do things like that for no reason."

"I suppose," the Professor said scratching his chin.

"Hey Ron," Harry said with a smile. "What's with Hermione?"

"Don't know," Ron said. "Still throwing up?"

"Feeling better," Harry replied.

"So did Mr. Black show up?" Ron demanded. "I didn't see him."

"He's here," the Professor confirmed.

"Where is he?" Ron scanned the crowd.

"I told you," the Professor replied smugly. "He could be sitting right next to you and you wouldn't even know it."

"Well . . . I don't see him," Ron said. "Do you see anyone odd Harry?"

"In this crowd?" Harry asked, shooting the Professor a nasty look. "You're going to have to narrow that question down quite a bit."

AN: My computer was being repaired, let's use that as the excuse for why I haven't updated sooner. For some reason I keep typing 'p' when I want to type 'b' and it is really starting to annoy me. Percy and Penny were already married on paper, the monk just came to give a blessing which is about as much participation as they normally have in Buddhist weddings, granted I could have written out a big long production but why bother.

Omake Part 2 - If the room actually worked that way by MisterQ

A little while ago, the Dark Lord Voldemort was addressing his inner circle.

"Tonight, I must be alone to plan the demise of Harry Potter and Mr. Black!" He spoke with authority. "Now, I shall go to my private thinking chamber. Do not disturb me for any reason, understood?"

The high level Deatheaters all nodded, not wishing to experience the unforgivable pain curse.

"Good, now leave me!" The dark lord spoke as he walked into his thinking room, a small converted bathroom. He sat on the.. um.. throne and cast every locking and silencing charm he knew of.

"Now to get some ideas in the usual way." He said as while picking up the latest issue of 'Naughty Which Magazine' and opening it to the centerfold so he could.. er.. read the articles. "Heh, and the headmaster of my old orphanage said this would make me go blind."

And Voldemort's head promptly dissapeared.

When Tom Riddle split his soul into horocruxes so he would be able to survive just about anything, he succeeded beyond his wildest dreams. If, 12 years ago, he would have cast any curse other than the killing one at a baby Harry Potter, he would have survived the feedback without any problems. Unfortunately, a spell to separate body and soul turned him into a black smokey phantom for more than a decade. Having his head and most of his heart suddenly separate from his body had no such detrimental effects.

When Voldemort suddenly saw Harry Potter, he immediately tried to curse him. That's when he noticed something was very, very, VERY wrong. For one, he couldn't feel his wand, or the rest of his body for that matter; two - not having any lungs, he wasn't able to speak; and worst of all, he had no idea what happened to his issue 'Naughty Witch Magazine'. All he could do was silently mouth obscenities at the trio of students in the Room of Requirements.

"Oh man, I wish I'd never learned how to read lips." said Harry as he chewed on a piece of Voldemort's heart. "M... dark lord jerky."

Hermione was shocked until she remembered what Harry had said. "Vampire part?"

"Yeah. My vampire side likes the tasty blood of the Dark Lord." Harry said before changing suddenly into his part man - part wolf form. "But my werewolf side loves the chewy center."

If anyone were to listen closely, they would hear the well-oiled gears in the bushy-haired girl's head crash and shread. Hermione promptly decided the best course of action was to faint. Ron quickly followed suit.

The next day, Hermione woke up in her bed and stretched in restful pleasure until she remembered what happened the previous night. "Wow, that was the craziest dream I've ever had!" she said after dressing and heading out to the common room.

"If it involved Harry and the head of a certain Dark Lord, than it wasn't a dream." said Ron. They glanced at each other for a moment and raced up to the Room of Requirements.

They never expected the sight that awaited them. The entire room was cluttered with... stuff! And in the middle of the various items was a quietly contemplating Harry Potter.

"Harry! What is all this... stuff?" exclaimed Hermiony.

"Oh this? I decided to experiment with the room some after requesting you both appear in your beds." Harry said. "For instance, I really need the most powerful magic ring ever."

A small plain golden ring appeared in mid air and fell onto the lid of a golden ark.

"Whoa, do you feel that? This thing feels like one solid Imperius curse. Best get rid of it." Harry raised his head up.

"I really need this ring to be no more."

The golden ring vanished without a sound only to reappear a foot above the caldera of a mighty volcano.

Elsewhere.

"This ring is a great burden, Sam. I wish I didn't have to carry it to Mount Dum, but..." Whatever the small hobbit was about to say was forgotten as the one ring vanished.

Frodo blinked. Then blinked again. Gandolf and Samwise followed suit.

Frodo looked up at his wizard friend and spoke, "I wish Sauron and the one ring were destroyed."

Feeling the ring melt, Sauron chose that moment to explode - destroying Mordor.

Frodo, Samwise, and Gandolf blinked again. The ancient wizard did the only thing he could think of. With a twinkle in his eye, he pulled out a small pouch from his robes and extended it to Frodo.

"Do you want a Lemon Flavored Elven Candy?"

Back in the Room of Requirements, Hermione was puzzled.

"But.. vampire... werewolf.. Harry.. heart... Voldemort.." she said eloquently.

"Oh yeah, I transformed one of my nose bogeys into a bowling ball and encased Riddle's head in it. I hope Dumbledore likes his gift." Harry looked toward said pale green orb with the head of a very angry former dark lord in it, still mouthing words. "No, I don't think that would be anatomically possible either for me or for the doberman." He told the head.

"So what did you bring into this place?" Ron asked, looking around. He supposed if hundreds of students practised magic in the same building for a thousand years, the power of the room would indeed be fantastic.

He gazed around and saw just about everything he could ever imagine. There was a alabaster staff like the one he seen in pictures of Merlin, a black growling book with the word 'Necronomicon' on the side, some red sparkling ladies shoes, a small gold puzzlebox, a huge circle with strange symbols all around it, several small orange balls with stars in them, a amulet of what looked like a Yen symbol, a massive monolithic sword with several glowing orbs in it, a necklace of a glowing pink jewel, a sleek silver muggle car with the letters 'DMC' on the grill, and massive boulder with a silver sword stuck in it.

Harry looked over all the things in the room and slowly got up from his chair. "I suppose I should use some of this stuff."

"First, to take care of Peeves." Harry said while strapping on the working proton pack onto his back. He attached a light sabre to his side on a belt holding several odd red and white orbs. "Then, as for the remaining Deatheaters, I'm gonna catch 'em all!"

Omake by Anthony Henry

It was just another day in knockturn alley for Mundungus Fletcher, Suddenly one of his customer looked closely at the crest on one of the silverware pieces he was trying to sell. the customer read the latin on the plate "Toujours pur? Damn this is the Black Family Crest"

At the word "Black", Half of Knockturn Alley in hearing distance flinched and looked over their shoulders as if expecting death himself to be walking down the street. The other half did not bother looking over their shoulders they just RAN... Straight at Mundungus Fletcher picking him up giving him all the silverware he had sold earlier in the day and closing his case and physically carried him from Knockturn alley throwing him out into Diagon Alley before they crawled back into their various holes to hide from their near brush with Mr Black.

Mundungus Fletcher picked himself up off the ground grabbed his case and growled toward Knockturn alley mumbling under his breath "think they can throw me out do they!" Just then several loud explosions were heard coming from a nearby alleyway as he turned he noticed Auror Tonks and Harry Potter's friend Hermione standing just outside the alley watching a lightshow coming from the alley.

"Damn Tonks and Harry own this stuff better put it back... or else "

Just then a passing bystander asked Mundungus "Did you hear Mr Black just killed another 20 Death Eaters"

'Yeap i am definitely returning this NOW' Mundungus Fletcher thought as he raced to the Floo point

Omake: by Dean Angel

(based on the omake by Steve2) which was based off of Chapter 24)

Later that day:

"Oh, I hope 'Arrie's all right," one veela remarked to the other as they started walking into town to pick up some more supplies.

"We should ask someone in town and remember to call 'im Mr. Black, Gabrielle's cousin reminded the other veela.

As the two veelas walked into town they encountered the healer that had treated Mr. Black just earlier that day. The healer in turn noticed the tired appearance of the duo of veelas, a result of staying up several nights in a row.

"Oh, you're zee village Dealer, yes?" At the man's hesitant nod veela #2 continued, "EEs Mr. Black all right, we were worried about 'im. We knew it was a bad idea for him to continue screwing even knowing the dangers, but 'ee so wanted to please us." She said referring to him screwing in the light bulb on the ladder as a thank you gift to them.

"Ah, so it was true then," the healer said nodding to himself. "You are doing fine now then, or do you need anything that I can help you with?" The man asked, trying to be helpful.

"Non, we are just tired from staying up ze last few nights playing all the games zat 'ee wanted to." She punctuated this remark with a yawn.

"Did he play with just you two?" The healer carefully asked.

"Non, didn't 'ee tell you? 'Ee played with all nine of us." Gabrielle's cousin innocently said, not realizing that they we talking about two different things.

"By ze way ees Mr. Black alright?" Veela #2 said bringing the question they came to find out back to the forefront.

"Mr. Black will be all right, he just had a cracked pelvis and a severe case of dehydration, which I gave him some potions for," he reassured the two veela.

The veela thanked him and went to pick up the supplies that they came into town for. As they walked away the healer heard one veela worriedly ask the other if the dehydration was caused by all kissing they made him do.

Escape from Molly Weasley

"Hey Ron," Hermione called out as she approached her friend. "Have you seen Harry?"

"Yeah," Ron said. The boy spent a few seconds looking around before he found his target, "he's over there talking with HENCHgirl."

"Oh," Hermione said quietly. "He's been spending a lot of time around her since we got here . . . do you think that he's avoiding us?"

"She's a pretty girl," Ron replied with a smile. "Can't blame Harry for noticing that."

"I guess," Hermione said slowly. "But it's like he changed when he got here, even more than he did after summer."

"We all changed a bit when we came here," Ron rebutted. "You keep getting stunned into silence every time someone tells you more about Mr. Black. Hannah's been hovering around my mum because she wants to make sure she makes a good impression. Mum won't go more than a few feet away from Percy and Penny. And I haven't strayed far from the food, there are foods here that I've never even heard of."

"I'm just worried about him," Hermione said after a moment of thought. "I'm worried about you too, you'll be too fat to climb the stairs to your dorm if you don't let up on the food."

"Hannah says that she likes a man that isn't too thin," Ron said with a grin.

"You've never been too thin," Hermione teased. "And don't talk with your mouth full, it's disgusting."

"You're just jealous that I can multi task," Ron said quickly. "Some of us have the brain power to do two things at once and I'm afraid that you're not one of them."

"Eating and talking at the same time is not multi tasking," Hermione said as her face twisted into a grin.

"Multi tasking is doing two things at once isn't it?" Ron asked slyly.

"Yeah but . . ."

"And talking and eating are two different things right?" Ron interrupted.

"Well yes but . . ."

"So by definition that's multi tasking," Ron finished smugly. "Must be hard for you to loose all these arguments to me."

"Why you," Hermione glared.

"Couldn't think up a good response huh?" Ron said with a grin.

"Looks like the Professor decided to join Harry and Henghgirl," Hermione changed the subject.

"Guess he didn't want Harry moving in on his girl," Ron said with a grin. "I think Harry can take the little guy."

"I don't think the Professor and Henghgirl are dating," Hermione said sharply. "And even if they were, I'm sure that the Professor would be mature enough to allow Henghgirl to talk to other people without getting jealous."

"Set your sights on someone else," Ron said quickly. "The Professor's too old for you."

"That isn't what I ment," Hermione said with a frown. "And you know it, stop trying to lure me into another argument."

"Ok," Ron agreed with a shrug. "Then if you want my opinion, I would guess that Harry is trying to get a meeting with Mr. Black so that he can get some new stuff for the DA."

"That does sound like something Harry would do," Hermione said slowly.

"And you'd have been able to figure that out if you'd stop worrying about Harry being different and accept the fact that people change," Ron teased. "Just accept the fact that he's growing up and you'll be much happier."

"I suppose," Hermione said.

IIIIIIIIII

Across the room, Harry continued his conversation with the Professor and Henghgirl.

"I completed those wands you asked about," the Professor slipped Harry a large package. "Bright orange, pink, and other pastel colors."

"Great," Harry said enthusiastically. "And you're sure that no one can listen in on this conversation?"

"Yup," Henghgirl replied. "We've been developing new spells. This one is based on some of those odd Russian ones, if anyone listens they'll hear us talking about defence techniques but they won't remember any specifics."

"You can tailor it to any situation," the Professor added. "You could make it a conversation about politics, sports, or anything else that might be commonly overheard."

"And the best part is that any listeners won't pay it the least amount of attention, they'll dismiss it as unimportant and move on." Henghgirl said proudly, "that last part took a solid week to get right."

"You guys really out did yourselves on that one," Harry said in amazement.

"We try," Henghgirl replied modestly.

"Do you have any other ideas for devices?" The Professor got straight to the point.

"Just one," Harry said slowly. "I was wondering if a device that mixed potions would be possible to make? My idea was that you would drop in the ingredients and the device would do all the work."

"Maybe," Henchgirl said slowly. "It wouldn't be able to do some of the more complex potions and the quality wouldn't be as high but it might be possible."

"Would it be possible to make it into a flask?" Harry said with a grin, "or failing that could you make a flask that could hold potions in the best way that the need to be stored? It would have hot charms for potions that are best hot and so on?"

"Maybe," the Professor said with a thoughtful grin. "What do you think Henchgirl?"

"I think the hardest thing would be be a tricky bit of spell work to make the flask recognize the potion that you filled it with but it shouldn't be a problem after that," Henchgirl said. "We might be able to get something like that mix some of the simpeler potions, it'd be hard to get it into something that small."

"Would it be possible to make your vitamin potions in it?" Harry asked hopefully, "they're good and I miss them."

"That's another idea," Henchgirl mused. "A flask that will mix up drinks . . . that would be much simpler to make."

"Might have more of a market too," Harry agreed.

"Sounds interesting anyway," the Professor added. "I think it'd be fun to make."

"Great," Harry said with a grin. "Henchgirl tells me that the various law enforcement agencies want to turn this place into a school?"

"Yes," the Professor agreed. "I think it may be a good thing for us, what are your thoughts on the matter?"

"I think it could be a good thing," Harry said. "Are we sure that we can do this without letting them know anymore then we have to?"

"I think I understood that." HENCHGIRL'S eyes crossed. "And yes, they'll only learn what we want them to learn about us."

"Great," Harry said with growing enthusiasm. "See if we can get Moody to teach a few classes, and be sure to record anything that gets taught."

"Record?" The Professor asked.

"It would be nice to have a library of classes taught by various people," Harry explained. "Let's say for example that Moody gives a class on . . . dueling that I can't go to for one reason or another. If we have a recording then I can watch it in my own time."

"I think I have a few ideas for how this might work," HENCHGIRL said. "What do you think Professor?"

"I also have a few ideas," the Professor said with a nod. "And some of them involve having to build specialized classrooms."

"That'll keep the Architect happy," Harry murmured. "Looks like things are winding down."

"Might be a good idea to drift back to the group you came with," HENCHGIRL suggested. "Else they'll start to wonder why you're spending so much time with us."

"I suppose," Harry agreed. "You guys take care, don't hesitate to call me if you need me for some reason."

"We won't," the Professor promised.

"Are you sure you want to go back to school?" HENCHGIRL asked, "you don't seem like you like it very much and I'm sure that you're not learning much that you don't know."

"Good point." Harry sighed, "the world moved and Hogwarts stayed in the same place. I'm gonna try to stick it out for a little longer, maybe things will get better."

"Ok," Henchgirl agreed. "But don't forget that you have a home here and don't forget that I can teach you Potions better than anyone at that school of yours."

"I'm fairly good with charms," the Professor added. "And I'm sure that it would be possible to learn from the others also."

"Thanks guys," Harry said with a tight smile. "I'll see you later."

"Goodbye my friend," the Professor took his hand.

"Bye Harry," Henchgirl said sadly. "We'll miss you."

"I'll miss you guys too," Harry said with a tight smile. "Well . . . I guess I'd better get back to being Harry Potter."

Harry took a deep breath and then forced his features into impassivity. Giving one last smile to his friends, he turned and walked back into the crowd.

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"Looks like Harry's finished his conversation," Ron said with a grin.

"Think we should go talk to him?" Hermione asked nervously.

"I'm staying with the food," Ron said quickly. "But you can feel free to leave if you want."

"Thanks Ron," Hermione replied. It was hard but the girl managed to force herself not to mention her friend's eating habits. Ignoring Ron's snicker, Hermione walked across the room to meet with her other best friend. "Hey Harry."

"Hello Hermione," Harry replied. "How are you enjoying the party?"

"It's fascinating to have a chance to learn more about Mr. Black," Hermione said quickly.

"I agree," Harry said with a smirk. "The more I learn about the exploits of the Mysterious Mr. Black, the more shocked I am that any of them could have ever happened."

"Are you feeling better," Hermione asked suddenly.

"Much," Harry agreed.

"I saw you talking to the Professor and Henchgirl," Hermione said slowly.

"Oh?"

"Yes," Hermione confirmed. "Are they as interesting as one might think?"

"Yes they are," Harry agreed. "They're very . . . unique people."

"Do you think they could help us with the defence group?" Hermione tried another tact.

"Yes I do," Harry said. "They gave me a few things that might be very useful."

"Like what?" Hermione asked with a grin, now they were getting somewhere.

"You'll see," Harry replied. "I think you'll like it."

"Come on Harry," Hermione begged. "Tell me now."

"Are you feeling ok?" Harry asked, "you're acting a bit odd."

"Odd you say?" Hermione asked nervously.

"Yes odd," Harry agreed.

"I guess it's all the excitement," Hermione said quickly. "It's not everyday you visit Mr. Black's home."

"No it isn't," Harry said calmly.

"So what did you get from Henchgirl and the Professor?" Hermione asked quickly.

"Like I said," Harry said with an amused grin. "I'll tell you later."

"When?" Hermione demanded.

"Why don't we have a meeting when we get back," Harry suggested. "I'll tell you then."

"Any plans for the meeting?" Hermione turned serious.

"Some dueling practice," Harry replied. "I might teach a couple new spells."

"Like what?" Hermione asked.

"Like the acme charm," Harry said with a grin.

"The acme charm?" Hermione asked with a raised eyebrow.

"Can't be one hundred percent serious," Harry explained. "And it is a useful charm."

"What is the acme charm?" Hermione asked after a moment of thought.

"I'm not surprised you don't know it," Harry said. "It's a fairly new charm."

"And what does it do?" Hermione asked patiently.

"It drops an anvil on the target of the charm," Harry replied. "I'm told that they're working on an improved version of the charm that lets you choose to have an anvil, a piano, or a large weight with ten tons written on the side."

"Why does that sound familiar?" Hermione asked slowly.

"Bugs Bunny," Harry said. "The creators of the charm got the idea from the old cartoons."

"It's a good idea," Hermione said after a moment of thought. "I bet there are a lot of other things in the muggle world that could inspire new spells."

"Might be worth looking into," Harry agreed. "Looks like things are winding down."

"Let's round up Ron and the others," Hermione suggested. "I don't see any reason to stick around much longer."

"We won't have time to go to our afternoon classes," Harry teased. "Doesn't matter how much you hurry."

"But we might have enough time to set up a meeting with the defence group," Hermione retorted.

"You're right," Harry said with a grin. "Let's get everyone."

Harry and Hermione walked over to the table where Ron was stuffing his cheeks. "Ready to go?" Ron asked before Harry had a chance to open his mouth.

"Yes we are," Hermione agreed.

"Just a sec," Ron raised his hand to wave at his girlfriend. "Hannah'll be over in a second and she'll probably bring Ginny with her."

"Planned things out ahead of time did you?" Harry asked with a grin.

"Had to," Ron replied. "I'd have never been able to get close enough to talk with her during the party, I'm surprised Mum let you go Hermione."

"I told her I had to look after Harry," Hermione said with a grin. "Poor boy would have never gotten enough to eat without someone watching him."

"You what?" Harry asked in shock.

"You should have seen the look on Ginny's face when I said that," Hermione's voice was tinged with laughter. "It was a mixture of betrayal for being abandoned and anger at not having thought of that dodge first."

"But I'm not helpless," Harry sputtered. "I can feed myself."

"You'll never get mum to believe that mate," Ron said sympathetically. "Best just to go with it and look for a chance to escape when she's not paying attention to you."

"Thanks for waving at me Ron," Hannah said with a grateful smile. "You're mother's great but she can be a bit much sometimes."

"How could you abandon me like that?" Ginny growled at Hermione.

"It was every girl for herself," Hermione replied with a grin. "You'd have done the same to me."

"Yes I would have but I didn't have a chance," Ginny retorted. "You owe me."

"I owe nothing," Hermione replied. "You're just jealous I was smart enough to think of a way to escape first."

"Why don't we go to the portkey point," Harry suggested. "We can discuss Ginny's jealousy later."

"You too Harry?" Ginny said in mock horror. "What is this pick on Ginny day?"

"Yes it is," Hannah agreed. "And it's pick on Ron day next week, don't you have one of those calenders the twins put out?"

"They put out a calender?" Ginny said quickly, "I'm gonna kill those two."

"They put out more then just that," Hannah said with a grin. "Cute birthmark."

"Birthmark?" Ginny asked flatly.

"Yes," Hannah agreed. "It's very cute."

"How do you know about my birthmark," Ginny asked in a dangerously calm voice.

"I think I'll let you work that out with the twins," Hannah said calmly. "It wouldn't be proper to get involved in a family matter like this."

"Tell me," Ginny demanded.

"Well . . ." Hannah began, "if you're sure."

"I'm sure," Ginny agreed.

"Got ya," Hannah said with a grin.

"What?" Ginny asked in shock.

"I got you," Hannah replied. "It wasn't hard, one would think that you wouldn't have been so gullible after growing up with the twins."

"Gullible?" Ginny growled.

"Apparently," Ron replied. "And you were worried that a timid little Hufflepuff like Hannah would have problems in our family."

"Ok," Ginny conceded. "I'm willing to admit that I'm not worried about her not being able to fit in."

"Great," Hannah enthused.

"Now I'm worried that she'll fit in too well," Ginny finished.

"I've got the Portkey," Hermione said quickly. "Everyone grab hold."

AN: FYI, to all the people that demanded faster updates. It really doesn't motivate me to put parts out faster, I update when the muse hits and not sooner. I do not need five people a day messaging me to ask when I'm going to update or to tell me to update faster, it doesn't help.

Omake by vl100butch

Rorsch and JKR own the characters, if you have ever been in the 1632 group on Baen's Bar you know exactly what I'm talking about. There a whole bunch of inside jokes here... The Pencil was urgently looking for his immediate boss, the Professor. In his hand was a very important invitation. When he found the Professor, and handed over the invitation, the Pencil knew that he did a very important thing for

Professor Fergus Farnsworth. The Professor began to run through the halls of the Black Fortress yelling for Henchgirl at the top of his lungs. He held a opened letter in his hands that was obviously the source of his excitement. "HENCHGIRL, we've been invited to talk about our Zeppelin," he exclaimed. "Who invited us?" asked Henchgirl. "The Society for the Prevention of Tesla Turbine Powered Sten-Gun Armed Dirigibles is inviting us to their annual convention in Fairmont, West Virginia," he answered. "Why are they asking us, our Zeppelin is powered by Tesla Turbines?" Henchgirl asked. The Professor went on to explain that they met members from this organization just before they took the Zeppelin out for the first time. "Remember, they were that nice group with the pipes and baseball bats, and when we told them that the Zeppelin was a Zeppelin, was not a dirigible, and under no circumstance were we going to arm it with STEN guns, wished us good luck." "Oh yes," said Henchgirl. "They were a very nice group." Anyway, they looked at the official invitation, signed by Ursus T. R. Bear, the group president. The group asked if they could tour the Zeppelin to see the latest construction technology in Lighter-than- Air aircraft. They had already made arrangements for the Zeppelin to dock at the Round Barn in Mannington, West Virginia, a small town a few miles from the hotel that was the convention site.

Inflatable Bust

The portkey deposited the group of students in the great hall. "Looks like they haven't started serving the last meal yet," Hermione said.

"You guys go gather the group," Harry suggested. "I'll get the Room of Requirements ready."

Everyone agreed and went their separate ways. Harry walked up to the Room of Requirements and focused on making a large dueling platform and a stand of bleachers.

"Dobby," Harry called out.

"Yes Harry Potter sir?" Dobby popped in.

"Would it be possible to get some food served here later?" Harry asked, "I was hoping to get in some studying with my friends and I thought we might miss our dinner."

"Dobby will take care of it Harry Potter sir," the little elf agreed.

"Thank you Dobby," Harry said fondly.

"Thank you Harry Potter sir," Dobby snapped back. Harry began chuckling and the little elf disappeared.

Harry opened the box to inspect the safety dueling wands. They came in an assortment of exceedingly pastel colors such as, hot pink, blaze orange, and many more.

"They really outdid themselves with these things," Harry muttered to himself. "What's this?" Nestled on top of the wands was a small black book. Harry flipped open the front cover and discovered a note written on the first page.

Dear Mr. Black,

Henchgirl and I have been talking to the Doctor and we have come up with several curses to end lives in ways that would appear to be

natural causes. These ways include but are not limited to, heart attacks, strokes, and several slower methods. I trust that you can find a use for these in your crusade against evil and injustice. We have also included in this book several charms from our friends at Acme to liven things up and there is the spell that we have been researching on the last page to perform the task that you asked for a spell to do and I thought I should include it because . . . well, why not. This book is charmed only to be readable to you and us.

Signed,

The Professor

And Henchgirl,

love Henchgirl.

While he waited for everyone to arrive, Harry opened his new book and began to read.

In ones and twos, Harry's students began to arrive. Most of them choose to take a seat at the bleachers, a few of them choose to cluster around Harry. When it looked like everyone had arrived, Harry closed his book and stood up.

"What are we doing today Harry?" One of the younger students called out.

"I've got some new toys to play with and some new spells to teach," Harry replied.

"Yay," the students cheered.

"Neville," Harry said with a grin. "I can trust you right?"

"Yeah Harry," Neville agreed quickly.

"Great," Harry said with a grin. "Take this wand and hit me with a reducto to the chest."

"What?" Neville asked.

"I can trust you," Harry said with a grin. "Why don't you trust me?"

"I trust you Harry," Neville agreed nervously. "Reducto."

Ginny screamed as Harry slumped to the ground, "what did you do Neville?"

"He told me to do it," Neville said. The poor boy was close to tears. "Why did he tell me to do that."

"Step back," Hermione ordered. Several quick steps brought her to Harry's side. "There's no blood."

"I thought he was gonna block it," Neville babbled. "I thought he was going to show us a new spell."

"I'll do that later," Harry's voice caused everyone to jump. "I take it you all enjoyed my demonstration?"

"How dare you worry us like that," Hermione growled.

"I told you to trust me," Harry said with a grin. "These new wands I got are for dueling practice. As you saw, they won't do any damage but they will replicate the effects. If Neville had hit me in the arm then I wouldn't have been able to use it and it would have hurt quite a bit."

"They can cause pain?" Hermione asked.

"Not much," Harry said quickly. "And might I remind you that pain is a good teacher."

"I suppose," Hermione agreed. "This might be a good time to teach that charm you told me about."

"Good idea," Harry agreed. "Any one ever heard of Bugs Bunny?" Several muggle born and half blood students agreed that yes they had heard of the infamous rabbit. "Acme," Harry flicked his wand. The students watched in delight as an anvil crashed into the ground. "Neat huh?"

Harry spent the next few minutes giving a short lecture on how to use the Acme charm . . . and another larger lecture explaining that while cool, the acme charm was also dangerous and should not be used against other people except in the most dire circumstance.

"What about coyotes?" One of the younger students asked, "is it ok to use the acme charm on coyotes?"

"I suppose . . ." Harry agreed slowly. "But I don't think there are any coyotes in Europe."

"Awww." The student slumped in disappointment.

"Ok everyone," Harry raised his voice. "Let's spend the next few minutes practicing the charm and then it's time for you all to go get something to eat."

Everyone spent the next bit of time practicing and after a few minutes, the younger students began to trickle out of the room leaving behind only Harry and his inner circle.

"Ok everyone," Harry said as soon as the last of the normal students left the room. "Let's get something to eat. Dobby?"

"Yes Harry Potter sir," Dobby popped in.

"Could you get us something to eat?"

"Yes Harry Potter sir," Dobby agreed. "Dobby will take your orders now."

Everyone gave the strange house elf their requests and Dobby popped out of the room to get their food.

"Ok," Harry said with a smile. "I have a few new spells to teach. The first one is a type of shield charm, sort of."

"What do you mean sort of?" Hermione asked.

"It conjures several small objects and causes them to orbit around your body," Harry replied. "They are working on a version that will

home in on any incoming curses but at the moment luck is the only thing that makes it work."

"Then what good is it?" Ron asked.

"Like I said," Harry replied. "They're working on a better version. If you know how to cast this version then it'll be easier to cast the improved version when it comes out."

"Makes sense," Neville agreed.

"This next spell," Harry looked at his inner circle. "Was one I almost decided not to teach you and there are several others like it that I won't be teaching."

"Why aren't you going to teach the others?" Hermione asked, "if you're going to teach one like it then it would make sense to teach the others along the same vein."

"It all depends on why I'm teaching it," Harry said with a grin. "This spell is one of the faster ones, it's quick enough that it'll work in battle . . . some of the others take a bit longer."

"What's the spell Harry?" Ron asked nervously.

"It's called the Triple Heart attack curse," Harry replied. "As the name suggests, it inflicts a massive and fatal heart attack on the target that kills within seconds."

"Why are you teaching us this Harry?" Hermione asked in horror, "and why do you know other spells like this?"

"I'm teaching this because it's not an unforgivable," Harry explained. "And I want you guys to have a quicker option then a reducto. It also doesn't take much energy to cast, much less then the reducto anyway."

"You still haven't told me why you know spells like this," Hermione demanded. "Tell me."

"I could say that you're better off not knowing," Harry replied. "Or I could say something about knowing your enemy, the truth is that they could be useful and I can't afford not to know any spell that could be useful."

"I can accept that," Hermione said meekly. "But I don't have to like it."

"Anyone else have something to add?" Harry asked the room. "Then before I continue let me just say this, only a few people outside this room know this spell. I would be willing to say that I'm the only person in Britain that can cast this spell, do not abuse it and do not teach it to anyone else. I think it would be best to keep the knowledge of an easy and untraceable way to kill to ourselves don't you."

The group all muttered their agreement. "Are you sure we need to learn this?" Neville asked with a frown.

"Are you sure we don't?" Harry retorted. "Just because you know a spell doesn't mean you're going to use it. Something you all may have missed is that everyone in the magical world is armed with a deadly weapon most of the time. In general, these people don't go on rampages."

"What do you mean armed with a deadly weapon?" Ron asked with a frown.

"Our wands," Hermione replied for Harry. "Harry is saying that we're all dangerous without learning anything else."

"Something most people gloss over is the fact that the wizarding world is an armed society," Harry agreed. "Yesterday hundreds of people in the wizarding world went through their day without killing anyone. I'd say that most of these people knew spells that could cause harm or death and none of them used them."

"What about the death eaters?" Luna asked, "I'm sorry Harry but it needed to be explained and I didn't think anyone else would ask."

"That's fine Luna," Harry said warmly. "If you took away their wands then they'd use knives, take away the knives they'd use sticks, take

away the sticks they'd use rocks, take away the rocks they'd use their teeth, break out their teeth then they'd use their arms and legs . . ."

"We get the point," Hermione interrupted. "Spells don't kill people, people kill people."

"Spells and rocks and all that are just tools," Harry agreed. "Just because you have tools doesn't mean that you're compelled to use them. Some people just have something wrong with their brains, for one reason or another they kill for fun and power. The only way to protect society from these people is to kill them, it doesn't matter if you take away their wands they'll still find a way to cause trouble."

"What about prison?" Ginny asked.

"What about prison?" Harry replied, "we have several death eaters running around that were supposed to be locked in Azkaban forever. They got out, prison isn't a guarantee. People can escape or be broken out, some people are just too dangerous to be allowed to live. Besides, I personally think that the wizarding world's prisons are a disgrace. Kinder to kill them then to condemn them to life with the dementors. I don't know about you guys, but I don't like the thought of sentencing anyone to a life of torture."

"Torture?" Hermione asked nervously.

"What else would you call what the dementors do to people?" Harry said with a shrug.

"Dobby has brought your food," the little house elf called out. In his arms was an enormous tray.

"Just put it down Dobby," Harry ordered. "Would you like to join us?"

"Harry Potter invites Dobby to eat with him?" The little elf looked amazed, "I'm sorry Harry Potter sir but Dobby has work to do."

"Perhaps another time then," Harry suggested. "Thank you Dobby, we'll take it from here."

The group spent the next two hours practicing Harry's new curse and discussing possible scenarios where the curse could be used.

Ron pulled Hermione aside as the meeting broke up, "suppose you're not happy about that new curse?"

"I'm not happy that Harry's the one teaching it," Hermione replied. "I don't like watching him get colder, I'd hoped . . . I'd hoped that he could have gotten through this war without . . ."

"Things will get better when we have peace again," Ron reassured his friend. "We just have to get through the war and things will go back to normal."

"I guess," Hermione said with a frown. "It's just all been so sudden."

"Just give it time," Ron repeated himself. "War has a way of changing people so I'm sure that peace is the same way. Harry will go back to the way he was before the war and this'll all be just another unpleasant memory."

"I hope you're right Ron," Hermione said aloud. But I'm sure you're not, she finished in her mind. Nothing would ever be the same again.

The night passed and the day went by rather quickly. Most of the students arrived early for their defence class, for the first time in years they had a competent professor. One that wasn't a glory hound or death eater, one that seemed interested in teaching them how to defend themselves.

"Today," Professor Hamilton began. "We're going to be doing a bit of dueling. Can I have some volunteers?" Nearly every hand in the room shot up, "may I ask why you didn't raise your hand Mr. Potter?"

"I thought it best to see what the competition had to offer before committing myself," Harry replied.

"Excellent," Hamilton said with a grin. "Five points and come to the front of the room."

"Why?" Harry asked with a suspicious look on his face.

"Because you wanted to check out the competition," Hamilton replied with a grin. "So I'm going to use you as my demonstrator. I'll need a couple more volunteers . . . Mr. Malfoy and Weasley I think."

"I'll go easy on you Potter," Draco sneered as he walked to the front of the room.

"Hey mate," Ron said with a grin.

"Why don't you start out Mr. Malfoy?" The Professor suggested, "and we'll let Mr. Weasley face the winner."

Draco looked like he had won the lottery, a chance to duel and defeat scar head and the weasel and he wouldn't get in trouble for it, could this day get any better?

"Fine," Draco agreed.

"Rules?" Harry asked with a yawn.

"Don't use the unforgivables," Hamilton replied. "And try not to hurt him too much. On the count of three, you may begin. One . . . two . . . three."

"Serp . . ." Malfoy's curse was abruptly interrupted when Harry took several quick steps forward and kicked him in the groin.

"Doing my part to reduce inbreeding," Harry muttered under his breath.

Every male in class winced at the sound of hardened leather impacting on the future generation of the Malfoy family and more than one boy got violently ill when they saw the poor Slytherin's feet lift off the ground. Harry ended the duel with a stunner . . . most of the students would later agree that it was the kindest thing he could have done considering the circumstances.

"Uh . . . you wouldn't do that to me would you mate?" Ron asked nervously.

"I don't know," Harry began. "There are plenty of Weasleys in the world."

"And the world could do to have plenty more right mate?" Ron said quickly.

"Sure," Harry agreed. "I like Weasleys."

"If you gentlemen are finished with your pre-game banter?" Hamilton asked in amusement, "then you may begin in one . . . two . . . three."

"Hey look," Harry said pointing over Ron's shoulder. "Parkinson's in the nip."

"What?" Ron asked as he turned to look.

Needless to say, Harry's first and last spell ended the match.

"Sorry mate," Harry said to his petrified friend.

"Thank you for that demonstration Mr. Potter please take another forty points," Hamilton called out. "Everyone pair up and get in line."

The rest of the class's duels went in a much more . . . traditional manner and Hamilton looked ready to cry.

"It seems that Mr. Potter was the only one in this class that read the study material," the Professor said sadly. "Or perhaps the only one who understood."

"What do you mean Professor?" Hermione asked.

"Why don't we let it wait until the last duel has reached its conclusion," Hamilton suggested. "Ms. Brown, Mr. Finnigan." Lavender and Seamus took their places and prepared to duel, "whenever you're ready."

"Ready to loose?" Seamus said with a grin, "I'm gonna . . ." Lavender muttered an incomprehensible spell and Seamus's eyes bulged when he noticed a pair of new . . . enhancements on his chest. "What did you do to me?" Seamus tried to retaliate but with his new . . .

accessories getting in the way and the change in his center of gravity, he didn't stand a chance.

"Excellent job Ms. Brown," Hamilton's voice boomed. "Fifty points for reading and understanding the subject matter."

"Good job Lav," Parvati cheered.

"What'd she do?" Ron asked dumbly.

"She won the duel with a cosmetic charm," Hamilton replied. "One commonly referred to as the 'Breast Expansion' charm if I'm not mistaken."

"I got the idea from when Mr. Black beat those Vampires with a tanning charm," an extremely red Lavender explained. "And I wanted to get Seamus back for talking to my chest, my eyes are a bit higher."

"Yeah," Parvati agreed. "See how he likes having a pair of those for a few hours."

"In any case well done," Hamilton said with a grin. "I want three feet explaining other common spells that can be used in duels and another two in unconventional tactics, Mr. Potter and Ms. Brown are exempt from this and I would encourage them to use their time to do whatever they wish as a further reward. Well done you two."

AN: It's not leaving reviews that say update soon that bothers me, it's sending me private messages that tell me to update soon that annoys me. Sorry for the confusion. I'm going to try to end this by chapter fifty, I do have a couple sequels planned to take place after this but I have no idea when I'll get to them.

The Trap is Set

The common room of Hogwarts's most hated house was quieter than usual. Ever since his public humiliation at the hands of his arch nemesis in the duel during Defence, Slytheins leader had been sulking in his bunk. Many students took the opportunity given by Draco's absence to relax, it was wonderful to have a chance to let one's guard down a bit. Without Draco there was a significantly smaller chance of having one's family informed if one were to lapse, granted nearly all of them agreed that the world would be much better if it was a pureblood world . . . or at the very least a world where purebloods were able to keep their privileges but it was so tedious having to say it all the time. Couldn't some things just be left as given? Why did the little weasel have to send off an owl the minute one allowed their focus to fall on homework rather than the constant discussion on pureblood supremacy?

Draco would never realise how lucky he had been to get through his first year without suffering an . . . accident. In the end, the older students had decided to hold off citing the facts that Draco's father was an important ministry official and that their Head of House seemed to hold an unhealthy interest in the boy. Now, with the death of the boy's father . . . well, let's just say that things were beginning to change.

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"Damn that Halfblood," Draco muttered to himself. "I just have to wait, the dark lord will show them, he'll . . ." Draco paused and a thought began to form. "Why do I have to wait?" Draco mused, "why not set up a trap for that dirty Gryff scarhead?" Draco pulled out a piece of parchment and began to write what he knew about his enemy's weaknesses. "The Dark Lord ambushed Potter by using my blood traitor cousin, maybe I can do the same thing?"

Draco's eyes widened in shock as he realized that all he had to do was to make a few small modifications to the original plan and to . . . freshen the bait.

Feeling new energy, Draco lept from his bed and ran down to the common room.

A sort of resigned silence fell over the common room when Draco announced his presence. Back to the old routine . . . for now anyway.

"To me everyone," Draco called out. "I have a plan that will eliminate Potter and leave the way clear for our Lord."

"What is it?" One of the seventh years asked neutrally.

"None of your business," Draco snapped. "The only way this plan could fail is if we have a leak and I am not going to allow Potter to escape death again by letting you know all the details."

"So what are you going to tell us?" The student asked mildly, Draco's explanation made a surprisingly large amount of sense . . . if one were to ignore the source.

"You'll all only know enough to fulfill your part," Draco replied with a sneer. "Does anyone else have any questions?"

"I have one," another seventh year spoke up. "Who takes the blame if this fails?"

"You idiots," Draco said arrogantly. "My plan is perfect, the only way it could fail is if one of you were to muck it up. Any INTELLIGENT questions?" Silence greeted the boy's last question, "good. I want you to buy an owl . . . something black, or perhaps do it up in Slytherin colors."

"I'll get right on that," the student agreed slowly.

"I'll also need an isolated room set aside," Draco continued. "And warded so that a duel could be fought without causing any notice."

"I suppose I'll do that part," one of the questioning seventh years offered. It wasn't a difficult task, it also wasn't illegal. If . . . no when, the boy amended. Draco's plan failed, well . . . depending on how bad it failed it might be nice to be able to turn state's evidence to get out of any accessory charges. Father always said that courts preferred to

use those without too much blood on their hands. Of course, money could usually be relied upon to wash away some of the blood.

"Good," Draco said with a smirk. He knew that they'd all follow his lead, after all hadn't his father been one of the dark lord's greatest lieutenants until he went up against . . . well, death? "I'll also need someone to send a letter from the owl at a prearranged time."

"I'll do that," another weary student volunteered.

"And I want everyone else to standby," Draco finished. "Find a room near the dueling room to hide in until I go into the dueling room."

"Why do you need that?" One of the students asked, the girl barely managing to hide her smirk.

"I want witnesses," Draco replied. "And I might need you to keep me from being disturbed."

"Fine," the girl agreed.

"Now be about the roles I assigned," Draco commanded.

"So," one of the students whispered to another. "Do you think that idiot's going to try to duel Potter again?"

"Probably," the other student agreed. "Dumb git's been whining about how Potter didn't fight fair and how Potter attacked before he was ready. My guess is that moron'll lure Potter down, we'll watch Potter stomp him into the ground, then Draco will scream for help from the 'witnesses' and complain if we pretend not to hear it."

"Sounds about right, dumb little bastard. With his father gone, all he's got to protect him is Snape."

"We can get around that," the student agreed. "I don't fancy getting into a fight with Potter, he's changed."

"Fights dirty."

"And you should look in his eyes sometime," the student continued. "I've seen that look on some of my father's friends . . . you know the ones."

"Yeah . . . guess we won't be hearing Draco, room had too many wards."

"Sounds right, I'll tell the others."

IIIIIIIIII

"Is there some reason you called this meeting Amelia?" One of the other department heads asked. Since Fudge's resignation and subsequent . . . suicide, the department heads had been running the government.

"I have a dead man in one of my cells," Madame bones replied. "And he's agreed to tell me everything he knows about Voldemort on the condition that he is not sentenced to death."

"So why does this concern us?" The man asked slowly, "seems like the business of your department."

"Before I answer that, let me ask you a question." Amelia replied with a smile, "have any of you noticed that Ministry casualties have been . . . high in the last few weeks?"

"I lost five of my people," the man agreed. "All thanks to that idiot Fudge's policy of ignoring the problem and hoping it will go away."

"Seven from my department," another agreed. "Four of them in an accident involving fifteen pounds of pudding."

"Pudding?"

"Several of them were death eaters," Amelia replied quickly to get the meeting back on track. "According to the information given by my sources. At least some of them were working for Mr. Black, and I have no idea of what the actual casualty lists might be."

"Are our departments still compromised?" Arthur spoke up for the first time in the meeting.

"I don't know," Amelia admitted with a frown. "But I think it would be a good idea to investigate the matter."

"Do you really think Mr. Black would allow them to live?" Arthur pondered, "he hasn't left many survivors in the past."

"I don't know," Amelia interrupted. "But I've already ordered Moody to look into it."

"Mr. Black helps those who help themselves . . ."

"Then what's the problem?" Arthur asked, "you seem to have things well in hand."

"The problem is the trials from the last war," Amelia explained. "We have at least one innocent man going to prison for crimes he didn't commit, we have another that we now know escaped from prison with the help of a ministry official, and it's common knowledge that several death eaters bought themselves out of a kiss."

"So what are you saying?" One of the people prompted.

"I'm saying that it's long past time we take a look at the way we conduct trials in our world," Amelia replied. "It's long past time to update our laws and procedures so that these mockeries of justice can't happen again."

"I agree," Arthur said quickly. "I'd also like to see the last trial's wars looked over."

"I want every trial looked over," Amelia replied. "We'll start with the ones that still have people in prison and work from there."

"So what do you need from us?" One of the department heads asked with a frown.

"Your agreement," Bones replied. "Let's be honest, Mr. Black gutted our chain of command. Several of us are only acting department

heads because there isn't a Minister to confirm our appointments and the rest of us were removed from the chain because that idiot Fudge was too afraid that one of us wanted his job. Mr. Black killed or disappeared everyone in the normal chain and Ministry laws are so confused that it'll take us months to figure out who's supposed to be in charge. Whether we like it or not, this group is in effective control of the Ministry until we get a new Minister."

"So what are you saying Amelia?" Arthur asked, his mouth suddenly dry.

"I'm saying that I need your agreement before I do anything," Amelia said. "I refuse to act without a vote of majority . . . to do otherwise would lead to some very unfortunate things."

"I agree," Arthur said. "I don't think any one of us wants to be the new Fudge."

"Show of hands," Amelia spoke up. "All in favor of my plan . . . I guess the motion passes. Next order of business, we've got to get a new Minister . . . anyone have any ideas on how to find out who's supposed to be in charge? I've been looking through the mess that Fudge left us and I can't make heads or tails of it."

"We could try asking my son," Arthur suggested. "He worked as Fudge's assistant."

"And he's also Mr. Black's agent," Amelia said with a grin.

IIIIIIII

"Ok everyone," Harry called out. "I think it's time to get started."

Harry's students turned to him with looks of anticipation, "what are we doing today Harry."

"Duelling practice," Harry replied. "Remember the rules."

"It's only cheating if the other guy does it," the students repeated with a grin.

"That's right," Harry agreed. "The only unfair advantage is the one you don't have. This is not a game, this is war. The other rule to remember is to do unto others before they have a chance to do unto you."

The students signaled their agreement and broke off into groups. Harry watched as the students practiced the skills he'd been teaching and a smirk formed on his face, this wasn't a group that he'd willingly take into battle but it was a group that would surprise any attacking death eaters . . . hopefully long enough for help to arrive.

"Harry," Hannah called out. "Could I talk with you for a minute?"

"Sure," Harry agreed. "Come on over."

Hannah licked her lips nervously and walked over to Harry, "I don't know how to say this."

"Just say it," Harry suggested. "And we'll go from there."

"I'm sorry," Hannah spoke slowly. "I know I'm letting you down but . . . but I just don't think I could kill anyone. I'm so sorry Harry, I . . . I'm . . . I'll leave the group if you want."

"Why would you do that?" Harry asked with a puzzled look on his face.

"Because I can't fight," Hannah wailed. "I'm useless to you and I let everyone down."

"That isn't a problem Hannah," Harry assured his friend. "Do you know why I take the time to run this group?"

"So you'll have more people on your side when you confront Vold . . . Voldemort . . . Voldemort," Hannah replied nervously.

"No," said Harry. "It's so you'll all have a better chance to defend yourselves if the worst happens. I have no intention of leading any of you into battle and to be honest I wouldn't have a clue of how to lead you."

"Then what about your demonstration?" Hannah had calmed.

"It was the quickest way I could think of to show everyone how serious the subject matter is," Harry explained. "I don't want anyone playing around with the things I'm teaching you all, it's dangerous magic and it shouldn't be played with."

"Thank you Harry," Hannah said in relief. "But what should I do? I don't want to hurt anyone and I don't want to leave the group."

"Be creative," Harry suggested. "Lav won a duel with a breast expanding charm, you don't have to hurt people to win a duel."

"I could do that," Hannah agreed. "What do you want me to do when you're teaching everyone the advanced spells?"

"It wouldn't hurt to learn them," Harry said with a shrug. "But if you don't want to then I'd suggest you find something else to study, I'm afraid I might not be of too much help if want to learn something like potions or healing but I'll do my best."

"Healing?" Hannah asked with a smile.

"It could be useful to have someone around that can do a little healing," Harry agreed. "Come to think of it, it'd probably be for the best if all of us learned a bit of healing magic."

"And it'd be really good to know how to heal before I have children," Hannah said enthusiastically.

"You and Ron more serious then I'd thought huh?" Harry asked with a grin.

"I . . . um," Hannah croaked. "It's not what you think."

"Oh?"

"I've always wanted to have a big family," Hannah explained. "It's one of the things that attracted me to Ron, you know how big Weasley families tend to be."

"I know," Harry agreed. "And I think you two are good for each other."

"We're not that serious but it's something to think about isn't it?" Hannah asked nervously, "you don't think I'm strange for thinking about these things do you?"

"I think you're still young," Harry spoke slowly. "And I also think you're at an age when it's normal to think about what your future might hold."

"Thanks Harry," Hannah said quickly. Blushing, the girl reached up and kissed Harry on the cheek. "You're a good friend."

"Happy I could help," Harry replied. Harry checked his watch and realised that the time he'd allocated for the normal class was drawing to a close. The boy took a deep breath and raised his voice to be heard over the crowd. "Alright everyone, looks like our time is coming to a close. Does anyone have any questions?"

"Is it ok if we come up here to practice later?" One of the first years asked, "I'm having so much fun dueling that I don't want to stop."

"I don't see why not," Harry replied. "Just be sure to bring a couple friends, one to practice with and the other to be around in case of accidents. Another thing you could do is ask your Head of House for some advice, I know at least a couple of them are accomplished duelists. If there's nothing else . . . ok, keep your practice wands and try to do a little self study before the next class. I'd like everyone to research a healing spell before our next meeting. Goodbye and good luck."

The advanced group watched silently as the other students left the room and Ron spoke up after the room had emptied. "So what are we gonna learn today Harry?"

"I need some dummies in the corner," Harry said with a smile. "Watch closely." Harry flicked his wand and muttered an incantation under his breath causing a ball of black lightning to shoot out of the tip of his wand towards the targets.

"What the hell was that?" Ron said in shock.

"Russian battle magic," Hermione whispered.

"That's correct Hermione," Harry said proudly. "Russian battle magic was designed to be used by half trained conscripts. It's the easiest way I've found to do a lot of damage to a lot of people. It saw a lot of use in the winter war by troops on both sides and a bit less use in later wars due to the purges."

"Harry," Hermione said slowly. "Where did you learn . . ."

"Is that the only spell?" Ron demanded loudly, "what about defensive spells?"

"Defence isn't so good," Harry replied. "The wand movement for this spell is a short flick towards the target and the incantation is . . ."

IIIIIIII

In the staff room, the Professors were having their first meeting of the new year.

"It's been a few weeks since the start of the term," Dumbledore said with a smile. "How are the new students doing?"

"We have a good group this year," McGonagall spoke up.

"Good," Dumbledore enthused. "What about the other students?"

"I haven't had any problems," Minerva said with a smile. "Severus?"

"It's been a . . . quiet year," Snape admitted with a frown.

"How have your classes been Professor Hamilton?" Dumbledore turned to his newest teacher.

"Outstanding," Hamilton replied quickly. "The Potter boy's outstanding, it was like the material was written for him."

"Harry's always been good at defence," McGonagall added smugly. "What about Ms. Granger?"

"She spends most of her time glancing at young Potter," Hamilton replied.

"Hormones," Snape snorted.

"I don't think so," Hamilton said before McGonagall had a chance to retort. "She seems like she's worried about something."

"Mr. Potter . . . Harry," McGonagall amended. "Has been acting a bit odd since he returned from summer holiday." The room settled on an uncomfortable silence until McGonagall broke it with her next question. "Who else do you have your eye on?"

"Lavender Brown," Hamilton said with a grin. "So far, she's the only one that has a chance at beating Potter to the top of the class."

"Lavender Brown?" Minerva asked in shock.

"She won a duel with a cosmetic charm," Hamilton explained. "And when I assigned papers on creative defence her friends had the best ideas, one of them mentioned using a cleaning charm to blind opponents and another speculated on the possible uses of cooking charms."

"What does that have to do with Ms. Brown?" Dumbledore asked with a expectant grin.

"I asked the girls where they got the ideas," Hamilton replied with a grin. "They all told me that they couldn't have done it without help from their good friend Lavender."

"Really?" McGonagall asked in surprise, "perhaps I misjudged the girl."

"She just needed the right motivation," Hamilton explained. "She knows a lot of cosmetic charms and you should have seen the way her face lit up when she heard about how Mr. Black used a tanning charm to kill a group of Vampires."

"She realised that all the time she'd wasted on learning to be pretty could be used for something useful," Snape translated. "It's good to see one of your students using their brain Minerva."

"Why thank you Severus," McGonagall said smugly.

"If only she'd used that newly revealed brain in Potions," Snape finished with a sigh. "She could have been great if the hat had put her in the right house."

"Moving right along," Dumbledore interrupted quickly to forestall the argument he knew was building.

|||||

Hermione woke early that morning and rushed down to the common room to catch Harry before he went to breakfast. Her friend had ducked out of the defence meeting before she'd had a chance to corner him to ask him about where he'd learned about Russian spells.

"Hey Hermione," Ron called out as he walked down the stairs. "What're you doing up so early?"

"What are you doing up so early?" Hermione countered.

"Going to meet Hannah," Ron replied with a grin. "What are you doing down here?"

"Waiting for Harry," Hermione admitted.

"Oh, well he's not coming." Ron said.

"What do you mean?" Hermione asked flatly.

"He already went down to get breakfast," Ron explained. "He's been waking up earlier than everyone else this year, I think he's been researching new spells in the library."

"Damn," Hermione growled.

"Hermione?" Ron's eyes widened in shock.

"What?" Hermione snapped and immediately regretted it, "I'm sorry about that Ron."

"That's ok," Ron said in concern. "Why don't you tell me what's got you worked up this morning?"

"I wanted to ask Harry where he learned those Russian spells he taught us," Hermione admitted.

"Wanted to know if he learned it from the same book you did?" Ron asked.

"No," Hermione said. "I didn't learn it from a book."

"You didn't learn it from a book?" Ron asked incredulously, "then where did you learn about it?"

"Mr. Black rescued me and Tonks from a group of death eaters this summer," Hermione said slowly. "Mr. Black had the Professor rescue us."

"What happened next?" Ron demanded, "where you hurt? Why didn't you tell me?"

"I didn't get hurt and I didn't want to worry you," Hermione explained.

"So what happened next then?" Ron asked, his heart beat slowly returning to normal.

"We watched from a distance as Mr. Black killed the death eaters," Hermione replied. "He used some sort of explosive device first and then he hit them with a bunch of Russian spells."

"Oh," Ron said in understanding. "He might have learned them at Percy's wedding."

"Maybe," Hermione agreed. "But I want to hear what he has to say."

"Just don't push him too hard," Ron ordered.

"I won't," Hermione promised.

"Great," Ron said happily. "Let's go meet up with Hannah and go get some breakfast."

"Is that all you ever think about?" Hermione teased, "you're going to get fat if you keep eating like that."

"You're just jealous of my girlish figure," Ron retorted as they walked out through the Fat Lady's portrait towards the Hufflepuff common room.

"What'll Hannah think when she hears that?" Hermione asked in mock horror, "it must be hard on a girl to have to compete with her boyfriend like that."

"She's a strong girl," Ron said with a shrug. "She'll get over it."

"I . . ." Hermione cut off at the approach of one of the new first years.

"Excuse me," a young first year interrupted. "Could you help me?"

"What do you need?" Hermione asked with a friendly smile.

"I lost my toad," the first year said slowly. "And I was wondering if you'd help me find it?"

"Of course I will," Hermione agreed.

"Thank you," the first year said happily. "I didn't want to go to the Slytherin Prefects because I was afraid that they'd make fun of me again."

"Well I won't make fun of you," Hermione assured the young student. Her eyes flicking to look at the green and silver crest on the boy's robes.

"I've gotta go meet Hannah," Ron spoke up. "I'll talk to you later Hermione."

"Later Ron," Hermione agreed.

"This way," the first year said quietly. "He's down in the dungeons."

"That's to be expected," Hermione assured the small child. "Toads like dark damp places and it's not far from your common room."

Hermione followed the first year down several flights of stairs and through a maze of corridors.

"I last saw him in this room," the first year explained as he pushed through a darkened doorway.

"Then we had better start looking here," Hermione agreed. Hermione's grin disappeared when she noticed that the room was not empty.

"Hello mudblood," Draco sneered. "Fancy meeting you here."

"You said you'd give him back," the first year's voice quivered as he spoke.

"Here," Draco tossed a toad across the room. "Now go wait with the others . . . it won't be good for you if you try to go somewhere else."

"I'm sorry," the first year whispered as he brushed past Hermione.

"That's ok," Hermione whispered back.

"It's time to prove once and for all that your kind doesn't have a place in my world," Draco sneered. "I challenge you to a duel."

"You want to duel me?" Hermione asked in amusement.

"I want to prove that a pureblood can beat a mudblood any day," Draco corrected. "You're the best mudblood in the school so you're the best one to use in my demonstration."

"What makes you think that I'll participate in this farce?" Hermione asked with a grin,.

"Because Potter thinks the dark lord has you," Draco said gleefully. "If you don't get back to the great hall soon then it'll be too late to stop him."

"What?" Hermione's voice turned serious.

"I have no intention of letting you get out of this room," Draco continued. "Sure you don't want to duel?"

"Fine," Hermione spat. "Let's do it."

Draco took a second to adjust his grip and began waving his wand in a complex pattern. A grin adorned his lips in anticipation as he thought about what was about to happen to the dirty little mudblood.

Hermione's frown deepened, she recognized the spell Draco was about to cast. She raised her wand and prepared to cast a quick charm to interrupt Draco's preparations and hopefully end the duel before it had a chance to begin.

AN: So here it is, the set up for the last chapter and for the sequels. Hermione is acting the way she is because she doesn't like the fact that she's losing her friend and what Harry is now is clashing with her image of him. In my mind, Hermione's image of Harry draws from an eleven year old boy coming to the rescue of an eleven year old girl. Ron is finally maturing, I'm writing Hermione's view of Ron as a young prat that's finally growing up. I'm not sure that made sense, it did to me but often things that make sense to me make no sense to other people. Hermione knows what Harry has to do but she didn't want him to know, she wanted him to have to be forced into it and then for everything to be as they were.

Omake by D.J. Thorens

"Harry..." Hermione stopped when she looked across the table. He obviously wasn't paying attention. Instead his lips were forming a silent chant while he had his eyes apparently locked on a charms text in front of him. From Hermione's position it was obvious he was watching the head table from the corner of his eye. "Harry, if..." This time his raised hand interrupted her. But he still continued his chant and only sopped when a commotion(?) started at the head table. Hermione, along with the rest of the school, was treated to the spectacular sight of professor Flitwick growing, and growing hairy as well. Then, one after the other the same started to happen to the other teachers sitting there and enjoying their breakfast. "Forty-three seconds," Harry said, which he then immediately wrote down before

he turned to the girl across the table. "You were saying, Hermione?" "What, what did you do?" The shock was evident in her voice while her eyes stayed locked at the teachers. Those had finished their transformation and now appeared in various state of undress, depending on how well their robes had been able to withstand their sudden massive increases in size and bulk and how quick they were on remembering they actually had a tool at hand to solve this particular predicament. Sadly, Albus Dumbledore seemed not yet have caught on. "I'll tell you later." In all the commotion the fact that the Slytherin students were turning into seven-year-olds was completely lost. Later in the Gryffindor common room. "Don't freak, Hermione. It's just polyjuice. And Hagrid's hairs were the easiest to get. As for the Slytherins, there are some kids in Hogsmeade who don't mind sacrificing a hair for a good cause." "But how..." "A dose delivered with their drinks." "But they would have noticed the taste!" "Now that's the beauty of it, they wouldn't. I talked to Henggirl amongst other things about potions and how simple muggle processes like distillation and charcoal filtering can dramatically improve the qualities of a potion." "So you you tried it out?" "Nah. Remember our effort trying to brew a batch back in second year? I wouldn't trust myself not to foul it up in a hurry. And the specifics of the process are still trade secret of Black Ink. I simply asked Henggirl if I could have a sample." "Oh." "Yeah, this fortified version is almost tasteless if you give a spot of vodka to it and it should last a bit longer too. About twenty-four to forty-eight hours. And with vodka and lime it even runs on a timed trigger. Easier to catch all of them at once. "We have a pranking tradition to uphold and lately we seem to have lapsed a bit."

-Omake- Manatheron

Hermione chewed on her fingernails nervously, it wasn't something she was accustomed to doing, but somehow it just seemed right.

"Ron? Are you sure that maybe we shouldn't talk to him? I mean he DOES seem happy, but isn't this a little extravagant?"

Ron shrugged and helped himself to another BBQ.

"Nah, Harry will open up to us in his own good time."

Hermione chewed on her fingernails again before speaking up.

"But he was OPENLY flirting with a bunch of Veela yesterday! And they all kept giggling! Like they knew something we don't!"

Ron didn't respond however, his mind playing out some of his favorite Veela fantasy's while a pickle hung from the corner of his mouth. Seeing this Hermione huffed and then turned back to the stage where Former minister fudge was Holding a golden staff out to our favorite hero.

"with the blessings of Mr .Black, I now Dub you King harry the first! Long live the king!"

Hermione huffed a little bit as the rest of the crowd shouted back "LONG LIVE THE KING!"

Omake by Rijl Kent

Harry, Ron, and Hermione were still eating at the reception, when they were all surprised by the appearance of Mr. Black entering the room.

"Is that who I think it is?" Ron asked.

"It... can't be." Harry replied looking for the obscured face under the hood.

The three of them watched Mr. Black offer his congratulations to Percy and Penny, and talk for a short time with other guests before he made his way to the three of them. "Enjoying your visit, Harry? Ron? Hermione?" he asked them kindly.

Ron and Hermione just stared open mouthed at Mr. Black. Their stares turned towards Harry when he asked, "Who are you really?"

"Ah, ever the cautious one. I approve. Come talk with me a moment."

Harry followed the figure around a few corners to one of the secure spots nearby. Whoever it was knew the layout well to know the little

alcove was secured with privacy spells. When Mr. Black lowered his hood, Harry was astonished to see his own face looking back at him

"Wha-?" he said.

The other Harry just smiled and looked at his watch. "Here," he said, handing him the cloak, then removing a little hourglass on a chain from his neck. "I'm cutting the timing a little close. You need to go soon."

Harry started to understand how Mr. Black managed to show up, and he put the cloak on and activated the advanced obscuring charm. "But... how did you get the cloak and time-turner?"

Harry just looked at the new Mr. Black, and said, "Duh--I gave them to me!" He put the time-turner around his neck.

Harry started to say, "But then where did he, I mean, me get--" He was cut off as Harry turned the hourglass around once, and he went spinning away.

Harry walked back out the party smiling, saying to himself, "I waited an hour to see that look on my face... It was worth it."

Peace-

-Rijl

Kent

"Harry Potter and the Pharaoh's Charm"

Omake Part 3: The End of the Room of Requirements by MisterQ

A fully equipped and armed Harry stood up and blinked as a thought came into his head and wouldn't go away.

"You know, Ron. I don't even have to leave. I can just request the room to bring me a Death Eater. Then, as soon as they appear, I can capture them with these red capture orb ball thingies..." The Boy-Who-Lived had forgotten the proper name of the artifacts he requested that could capture deatheaters without harming them.

Ron stepped over a gibbering Hermione, her brain still imitating Window 98's 'Blue screen of death'. "It would take you forever to get

ALL the Death Eaters... and I think this room has been pulling objects from alternate realities, too. There are probably an infinite amount of Death Eaters in all the multiverse."

"You're right, Ron! But what can I do? I really do not want to kill all the Death Eaters everywhere if I don't have to. " Harry sat back down in his comfy chair and absent-mindedly started spinning the Dark-Lord-Voldemort's-Head-In-A-Snot-Filled-Bowling-Ball on the ground as fast as he could with one hand.

Harry looked at the green orb and said, "I request the bowling ball with Tom Riddle's head be placed on Headmaster Dumbledore's office desk. Add a note with the words 'Courtesy of Mr. Black and Harry Potter' on it."

The orb with the very very dizzy head of a Dark Lord vanished.

"Well, you're the master strategist. What do you suggest?" Harry shrugged.

Ron requested a similar chair to Harry's and sat down in it to think. "What if you request the room to make them not be Death Eaters?" he said lamely. "No.. that's stupid."

"Yes, Ron. That is stupid." Harry said. "So stupid it may just work!"

Hermione opened her mouth to try and retort to that sentence out of habit, but all that came out was a long string of drool and a 'Guh!' sound.

Harry, on the other hand, raised his head and said, "I request that the parts of the brain that make every Death Eater everywhere a horrible nasty person, be sent to the Zombie World."

Nothing noticeable happened in the room.

"Is there really a Zombie World?" Ron asked after a moment.

Harry just shrugged.

Zombie World:

"Zombie Dumbledore tell Zombie Harry Potter that Dark Zombie Lord is bad. Dark Zombie Lord keep all brains. He not share none!"

"Zombie Harry Potter think that bad also. Zombie Harry Potter wish brains fall from sky!"

"Zombie Dumbledore think that stupid wish!"

Pieces of Death Eater brains suddenly started to rain from the sky.

The two decrepit magical zombies looked at each other, blinked, and said what came naturally.

"Brains!"

"Brains!"

"Brains!"

"Lemon Drops.. er.. I mean.. Brains!"

Hogwarts:

The Room of Requirements was created a thousand years ago by all four of Hogwarts' founders in order to do one thing and one thing only: create food for the house elves to use to feed the growing student body. Hey, it was a thousand years ago and without current agricultural techniques, food was scarce. The founders figured that with time, the number of students would increase - so they made it that the room would absorb all the ambient energy in Hogwarts. Every time someone magically cast a spell into a wall, emptied a potions cauldron by tapping it, or just used magic - the Room of Requirements would absorb some part of it like a giant magical battery. But unlike regular batteries, with a limit on how much energy they could hold; the Room of Requirements - when full - would use some of the gathered magic to increase its limits. The end result being the single largest hidden concentration of pure magic anywhere on Earth.

So when Harry realized that he had just taken care of all of his problems and obligations to the Wizarding world, he did the only thing

he could think of. "I request that Ron Weasley and Hermione Granger were back in their rooms without the knowledge of what has transpired in this room since I've been here."

Harry's friends disappeared.

"In fact, I request that nobody except myself remember that the Room of Requirements exists or has ever existed." Harry looked at all the artifacts scattered around and realized that there was no need for them any more. "I request that all the artifacts here be placed back where they belong, unless they are evil - in which case I wish them to be no more."

All the various items in the room vanished.

Harry Potter stood in the center of an empty white room that only he knew of. Another thought entered his head and wouldn't go away.

"I... I request that the Room of Requirements be bonded to me. That the room and all of its abilities and powers were within me and would respond at my call."

Harry stood in the school corridor, right outside where the room should be.

He smiled.

"I request a large tropical drink."

As Harry walked to his next class, sipping his drink, he thought about requesting that everyone forget about Harry Potter. He could just be Mr. Black from that point. No longer paraded around as the Boy-Who-Lived or savior of the magical world, but just go on a much, much, MUCH longer vacation as Mr. Black. His island fortress and company ran fine without him. And with his capable support staff, he could travel around the world helping people full time.

But the more he pondered, the more he realized that there was only one chance to have a childhood. One chance to spend it with his friends, playing Quidditch without a care in the world.

So it was a happy Harry Potter that sat down in his chair in the dungeon to learn about potions.

Severus Snape came out as usual and stood behind his desk.

"Gah!" He drooled brainlessly, adding, "Duh!"

It was the best potions class ever.

Omake by Celebwen Telcontar

Comte Peirre de Chagney, the latest in a long line of de Chagney Comtes and Comtesses, paled as he saw the man. A very well done concealment charm was on the man's face, he was dressed in black, and had a large black hat. Peirre had no doubt that the man, obviously the infamous Mr. Black, had a lasso in his coat somewhere. It only fit the description. After all, hadn't Mr. Black, using the name Erik Destler, terrorised Vicomtesse Christine de Chagney nee Daae in the mid nineteenth century?

Peirre decided quickly to move to China and never see another live production of any kind. He knew only too well how good the Phantom of the Opera was at killing people! One toss of that Punjab lasso, and a person would be hanging by the end of it with a broken neck!

"Philippe," he called to the driver of his old fashioned automobiele.

"Oui, Monseur le Comte?"

"Take me directly home to de Chagney manor, and order a ticket to Shanghai!" Peirre fell back against the seat, hoping against hope that he would live until he got to Shanghai. He was after all related to the Raoul de Chagney, the Vicomte who married the illustrious Christine Daae!

THE END

Ron was halfway to the Hufflepuff common room when he ran into his best friend.

"Hey Harry," Ron greeted his friend.

"Morning Ron," Harry replied. "Going off to meet Hannah?"

"Yeah," Ron agreed. "I've been walking her to breakfast everyday."

"Good for . . . is that a green owl coming towards us?" Harry asked in shock.

"Must be something from Fred and George," Ron said with a laugh. "They're always testing odd charms."

The owl perched on a convenient suit of armor and extended it's leg.

"Let's see what they want," Harry said with a grin.

"Be careful opening that mate," Ron advised.

Harry's face hardened as he read the letter, "bastards."

"What's wrong Harry?" Ron asked nervously.

"It's a note from Voldemort," Harry replied absently. "He says that he's taken Hermione."

"What?" Ron paled.

"When was the last time you saw her?" Harry asked calmly.

"About ten minutes ago," Ron replied. "She went off to help a Slytherin firsty find his toad."

"Could have slipped her a portkey," Harry mused.

"What are we gonna do Harry?" Ron asked.

"Get her back," Harry replied. Harry deactivated the glamor on his bracelet and reactivated his SEP field.

Ron's eyes widened as Harry's hair began to grey and he got a brief image of a much harder looking man before Harry's features twisted into an unrecognizable blur

"Who . . . who are you?" The red head asked nervously.

"Me? I'm just a guy," the stranger donned a long black coat. "In bad need of a vacation."

"Wh . . . where's Harry?" Ron asked, afraid of the answer.

"He disappeared sometime this summer," the strange man replied. "Maybe someday I'll go find him again, but not now, now I'm going to go end a few people."

"Wait," Ron called as the strange man began to leave the room. "Take me with you, they're my friends and I want to help."

The odd man paused and looked back. "No you don't, if you come with me then you will die. Either your body or your soul, and I'm not going to be responsible for that, I've . . . I've ended to many lives to want to add another to the list."

"At least tell me your name," Ron called out.

The odd man turned away and walked through the portrait guarded door, "Mr. Black."

IIIIIIII

"Shatterbone," Hermione said quickly. A purple ball shot out the tip of Hermione's wand and destroyed Draco's wand hand. "Accio wand." Hermione ignored Draco's wand as it flew by her head and approached her downed opponent.

"How could you win?" Draco whined. "I'm a pureblood, it shouldn't have been possible for you to win."

"I practice dueling with Harry everyday," Hermione replied calmly. The tip of her wand was trained on Draco's face, "and I've spent hours researching new spells. What have you done?"

"My blood should have carried the day," Draco said as he cradled his ruined hand. "You shouldn't have had a chance."

"Interesting theory," Hermione said. Hermione's face hardened as she remembered the reason she fought the duel, "where's Harry?"

"Dead," Draco said smugly. "Or he soon will be anyway, just wait . . . when the Dark Lord assumes his rightful place as ruler of the world you'll have a chance to join him in death."

"Ignace," the tip of Hermione's wand started to glow red. "Do you know what this charm is?" Hermione continued, ignoring Draco's lack of response. "It was developed in 1642 to light pipes and fell out of use three years later when self lighting pipes were made available. I found it in an obscure book about . . . well, I suppose that doesn't matter. Where is Harry?"

"Shut up mud blood," Draco glared. "I'm gonna enjoy teaching you your place after the Dark Lord kills Potter."

"Really?" Hermione jammed the tip of her wand into Draco's arm causing him to let out a pained scream, "one interesting thing about the Ignace charm is that it does not cause any damage to the wand that casts it. This is an improvement on some of the older charms of that type that would sometimes cause damage to the tip of the wand due to the intense heat produced . . . are you ready to tell me where Harry is?"

"Go to hell mud blood" Draco shouted. Draco screamed as Hermione marked his other arm.

"The next time I don't get an answer," Hermione's face was expressionless. "I'm going to put this in your right eye."

"You can't do this," Draco shuddered. "You'll go to Azkaban."

"If you were to read the dueling code, I think you'd find that I can do anything to you I want aside from the three unforgivable spells, and I have far too much imagination to have to rely on a simple Curcio." Hermione moved the tip of her wand over Draco's eye, "last chance to give me an answer."

"WAIT," Draco started sobbing. "Malfoy Manor. I told him that you'd be at Malfoy Manor."

"That wasn't so hard now was it Draco, now let me explain something to you ferret," Hermione's eyes flashed dangerously. "If Harry dies, you die. You and your entire family will be no more, do you understand me?"

"Y . . . yes," Draco gasped. "I understand you."

"Good," Hermione growled. Hermione stunned Draco and walked out of the room, she was going to save Harry from himself . . . again.

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As he reached the limit of the castle grounds, Harry paused in thought. Reaching into his pocket, he pulled out his father's map and spent a few moments examining it. "Heh," Harry said to himself. "I knew Hermione was too smart to fall for any of that ferret's tricks." As he took a deep breath and looked back at the castle, Harry made his choice. "Guess it's too late to go back," Harry mused. "I've gone too far and done too many things, it's time things came to a conclusion."

|||||||

Hermione rushed out of the room and into a group of junior death eaters.

"Going somewhere mudblood?" One of them asked with a smirk.

"You don't want to do this," Hermione said flatly.

"Oh but we do," another disagreed.

"Is there a problem here?" A squeaky voice from the shadows asked.

"Who?" Hermione glanced over, "Dobby?"

"Dobby is here," the house elf confirmed. "Everything is under control."

"Dobby," Hermione began. "You have to . . ."

"Get behind Dobby Ms. Hermi," Dobby commanded. "Dobby has to take out the trash now."

"Take out the trash?" Hermione asked incredulously.

"Yes," the elf giggled. "Mr. Black says that it's important to make witty remarks before battle, unless it makes it not a surprise."

"I see," Hermione remembered the seriousness of the situation they were in. "Go get help while I . . ."

"It's Dobby's job to deal with them," the house elf replied firmly.

"But you can't . . . " Hermione watched in shock as the small elf pulled out a badge.

"Dobby works for Mr. Black now," the elf smiled and activated the transformation. "And Mr. Black doesn't like death eaters."

What followed could be described as a battle by someone's who's only experience with battles had been pushing around their younger school mates. Therefore it was lucky that the opposing side was mostly made up of the members of Draco's gang. Several of whom were shocked to learn that a dozen poorly trained junior death eater wannabes were no match for an enraged house elf.

"That takes care of that," Dobby nodded in satisfaction as he looked at the pile of his defeated foes. "Be happy that Dobby was here and not Mr. Black, Dobby was gentile, Mr. Black would not have been."

"Gentile?" Hermione asked with a smirk.

"Dobby let them live," the house elf looked up with wide eyes. "Mr. Black would not have been so generous."

"I thought house elves weren't allowed to harm humans?"

"Except in defence of their master," the little house elf replied quickly. "Dobby works for Mr. Black, Dobby is now in the service of the world."

"I . . . see," Hermione twisted her mind around that odd bit of logic. "I almost forgot, we have to stop Harry. He's walking into a trap."

"Dobby will get help," the house elf replied quickly. "Dobby will get an army."

"Wait I . . ." Hermione called out as the house elf disappeared. "Damn."

Hermione ran up several flights of stairs before finally running into someone in the great hall.

"RON." Hermione slid to a stop. "Harry's walking into a trap, we've got to go help him."

"It wasn't Harry," Ron replied in a dead voice. "He said Harry was missing."

"What are you talking about?" Hermione demanded. "Who said that?"

"Mr. Black." Ron turned to reveal eyes filled with tears. "He said that he didn't know where Harry is, and then he left."

"What?" Hermione paled. "We have to get the headmaster."

"I wanted to go with him," Ron continued dully. "I wanted to go fight, to . . . find Harry. Or . . . or avenge him, but he said no."

"Ron," Hermione blinked back her own tears. "I've called the DA, we're going to get Harry . . . are you coming with us?"

"I'll go to hell if that's what it takes," Ron took a deep breath. "If not even Mr. Black can find Harry then that means the death eaters have him, let's go get him back."

A resounding cheer rose from the collected ranks of the Defence Study Group that had arrived just in time to hear Ron's last statement.

"I need four volunteers, four that I can trust," Ron looked around the hall. "Not you Neville. I have something else in mind for you."

"Can you trust your sister?" Ginny stepped forward with a grin.

"What about me Ronald?" Luna gave a dreamy smile.

"I'll do it," Hannah nodded. "If you can't trust a Hufflepuff then who can you trust?"

"And I guess I make four," Dean stepped forward. "Can't let you girls have all the fun."

"I need you all to do this." Ron fixed each with a glare. "You will not argue about this, it's the most important thing that anyone here will do and I will not have any back talk."

The four students gave their agreement and braced themselves for the worst.

"Ginny, Luna, Hannah." Ron looked at the three girls. "You go to your heads of house, tell them about what's happening and where we're going. Dean, you go to Dumbledore. We don't have a chance without him and the Order."

Due to the seriousness of the situation, none of the four objected. Though Ginny did frown at her big brother's deviousness.

"Where are we going?" Neville asked, glad that Ron had told him to step back into the ranks.

"Hermione?" Ron turned to his remaining friend with a worried look, "you did think of that? Didn't you?"

"Malfoy Manor," Hermione took a deep breath. "Draco couldn't wait to tell me where to go."

"What'd ya do?" Ron smirked. "I can't imagine Malfoy doing anything to help us."

"All I had to do was ask him the right way," Hermione replied evenly. "And after a bit of quibbling, he told me everything I wanted to know."

"Is he still alive?" Ron's voice turned serious.

"For now." Hermione nodded.

"Let's go." Ron led the way. "We'll see if we can't catch a floo from the Three Broomsticks."

"We might have some help coming from Mr. Black and his people," Hermione raised her voice to be heard above the crowd. "So don't fire at anyone that doesn't have a mask unless they shoot first."

"Mr. Black?" The students started to relax as their prospects for survival took a dramatic upturn, "what's he doing there?"

"I would guess that he is going out to kill Voldemort," Ron's voice held a hint of satisfaction. "He made contact with me before he left."

"We don't have time for anything else," Hermione said. "Let's go."

The students marched out of Hogwarts and through the castle grounds.

"What's going on?" A passerby called out to the group of students as they marched through the United Kingdom's only magical town.

"We're going to go fight Voldemort with Mr. Black," one of the students replied.

"What?" The passerby asked incredulously.

"Join us or get out of the way," Ron commanded. "We're going to go make the country safe for decent people, you can join us or step out of our way."

"I can't let you kids go off to die on your own." The man said fatalistically, "let's go."

The small group picked up a few more members before the burst through the doors of the Three Broomsticks and walked to the fireplace.

Ron took a handful of floo powder and tossed it into the flames, "Malfoy Manner."

IIIIIIIIII

Harry arrived at the Malfoy residence and walked through it's few defences like they didn't exist. Stepping over the bodies of the few death eaters that had gotten in his way, Harry made himself to the the area that he felt a dark presence.

"Potter," the Dark Lord stood up as Harry entered. "So nice of you to come."

"Hello Tom." Harry's eyes shone with a unholy fury.

"You're here for the mudblood?" Voldemort smirked, "I imagine that she's still back in Hogwarts wondering where you are . . . unless Draco decided to show a bit of initiative."

"I know," Harry smiled.. "Little git's no match for Hermione and for your information the name's not Potter . . . it's Black."

"What?" The Dark Lord's eyes widened in fear, "Av . . ."

"Gassius Florine," Harry called out conjuring a a cloud of Florine gas around the Dark Lord's body. "Goodbye Tom." Voldemort gave a blood curdling scream as his body was consumed. Harry watched impassively as the Dark Lord's body fell to the ground. "And that takes care of that," Harry said in satisfaction.

"Av . . . av . . ." Voldemort's hand twitched as he attempted to cast the familiar curse.

"Not dead yet?" Harry asked in surprise, "well . . . we can take care of that problem." Harry's foot crushed the remains of Voldemort's wand hand and a quick spell summed it to his hand.

"Da . . . damn you," the dark lord gurgled.

"Guess all those rituals to extend your life and make that body more durable weren't such a good idea after all?" Harry asked with a grin, "I'd bet the pain must be horrific."

"Now," Voldemort commanded.

Harry felt a sharp sting in his calf as the Dark Lord's pet sunk her fangs in his leg.

"You think that's going to slow me down?" Harry asked with a laugh, "I think it's time to end this conversation of ours." Harry drew his sword and changed it to its scythe form with a thought, "goodbye Tom."

Voldemort didn't even have a chance to scream as the large scythe descended to remove his head. Harry felt a sharp jolt of energy as his blade destroyed the Dark Lord.

"Why won't you die?" Nagini hissed.

"I can't," Harry replied as he turned to destroy the last piece of the dark lord. "Goodbye."

A couple quick spells removed the bodies and Harry exited the castle to find himself in front of a large group of people.

"Hello Mr. Black," Dobby called out. "Is moldywarts dead?"

"Yes," Harry called back.

A loud cheer shattered the night and the men began clapping each other on the back. Away from it all stood Harry, just staring at the old house.

"Harry Potter," He looked down at his Phoenix feather wand. "Harry Potter would have never done the things that I've done, Harry Potter is dead." Harry frowned as he dropped his wand, "Mr. Black has taken his place. Damn it . . . I need another vacation"

"Are you alright my friend?" The Professor approached cautiously.

"Physically, but I am sick and tired of being Fate's plaything. Why can't I have a normal life? Why must I be the universe's spittoon? Not to complain but I'm getting more than ready to have a bit of quiet." Harry shook off the feeling and turned to his friend. "Your charm worked as good as you thought it would."

"Do you have any orders for the men?" The Professor didn't like to see his friend in such a melancholy mood.

"Kill any death eaters, free any Prisoners, grab anything of value, and get out before anyone else arrives." Harry said, his eyes went to Voldemort's wand still clutched in his left hand. "Screw it," Harry said. "I don't need another wand." Harry dropped the wand next to his brother and turned back to his friend.

"We'll be gone in less than a minute," the Professor said.

Harry's orders set off a frenzy of activity as the men carried out his will. After about thirty seconds, the Professor approached with a man dressed as a death eater.

"Yes?" Harry asked.

"This is Phil," the Professor introduced the man dressed as a death eater. "He, along with almost every other death eater you allowed to live is a deep cover agent for one of the various Police and Intelligence agencies."

"And?" Harry prompted.

"And if you'll take down the wards," Phil said. "We'd like to finish this place off with a little 'gas leak' if you don't mind."

"Sure," Harry agreed. "Why not."

"Thank you," Phil said with a grin. "Pleasure to meet you and an even greater pleasure to be allowed to work with you."

"I'll make sure everything is set up," the Professor said with a grin.

"Ready to go sir," one of the men called out to Harry. "Anytime you're ready."

"Then go," Harry smiled. "Thank you all for coming."

"The pleasure was all ours sir," another man called out. "Thanks for inviting us."

Harry activated the invisibility enchantments on his robe and faded from sight, "I'll be around."

"I can't see him," the man stared at the spot that had previously held Mr. Black in shock.

"Mr. Black is very good at invisibility," the Professor replied as he prepared to port up.

"You don't understand," the man completed his own preparations. "I can usually see the invisible, I can't see Mr. Black and I don't think he used any form of magical transportation."

"He's Mr. Black," the Professor explained and activated his portkey.

"He can do anything," the other man nodded and activated his own.

Harry walked away from the house to a safe distance and waited for the old house to disappear.

IIIIIIIIII

"Damn it," Ron repeated. "Malfoy Manner, I know that's the bloody address."

"What's wrong?" Hermione asked with a frown.

"Bloody floo won't connect," Ron replied tightly.

"Try Budgy Smudgy," a red third year suggested. "That's my grand mother's house, it's not far from where the Malfoy's live."

"Budgy Smudgy," Ron called out. "It worked, let's go."

IIIIIIII

Dumbledore arrived just in time to see the Malfoy home disappear into a horrific ball of fire.

"No," Dumbledore whispered in shock. "NOOOOO," Dumbledore screamed. "Harry?" The old man cried out, "Harry, call out if you can hear me." Hearing no answer, Dumbledore began checking the corpses with a growing sense of dread, "please be alive. I'll save you Harry, just hold on a bit longer."

"Professor?" Dumbledore froze at the sound of a voice behind him.

"Yes?" Asked as he turned to look at the mixed group of students and townsfolk.

"Where's Harry?" The young student asked with a frown.

"I don't know," Dumbledore said sympathetically. "But we're going to find him. Everyone start digging, every second counts."

The group set to work sifting through the rubble and they were soon joined by the Order, then a group of Aurors led by Madame Bones, and finally by a group of civilians. One thing bound them together, the belief that they had to find Harry Potter before it was too late.

"Hermione," Ron's voice cracked as he called to his friend. "I think you should come over here."

"What is it?" Hermione asked crossly.

"Just come over here," Ron repeated.

"Very well," Hermione agreed. Ron's eyes refused to leave the ground as he waited for his friend to arrive. "Now what is it?" Hermione asked.

"Is this what I think it is," Ron pointed to something on the ground.

"His wand," Hermione confirmed in a whisper.

"Professor Dumbledore," Ron yelled. The boy felt a lump in his throat and he was uncomfortably close to tears. "Come over here."

"Did you find him?" Dumbledore asked as he ran towards the group.

"No," Ron replied. "We found his wand."

Dumbledore looked down to see two wands, both strangely untouched by the destruction around them. "He won," Dumbledore said tightly. "No matter what the future may hold, we will meet it secure in the knowledge that Harry Potter won his duel and made the world safe for us."

It took them another hour to sift through the rubble and it became clear that Harry Potter's body was not to be found beside those of his enemies.

Through it all, Harry Potter watched. His heart ached and he was racked with guilt as he saw the number of people and the effort expended first to save his life and finally to find his body. As he watched, Harry realised that he couldn't just disappear as had been his original intention.

Jotting out a couple quick notes, Harry walked down to the group and dropped them in front of his friends. Unable to think of anything else to do, Harry decided to leave before his resolve disappeared.

"Professor," Ron yelled. "I found an envelope." People crowded around to hear the words as Ron read.

To the Wizarding World,

Do not expect me to solve every one of your problems, Tom Riddle was your responsibility and you failed to live up to my expectations. He annoyed me, see that you don't.

Mr. Black

Guys,

I'm sorry but I just can't come back to Hogwarts. There used to be a saying, 'how will you get them to go back to the farm after they've seen Paris?' I can't go back to Hogwarts, I'm sorry. I'm not saying that I don't want to be your friends anymore . . . I couldn't give that up. I just need more time to clear my head. Maybe I can come back in a few years, I love you guys but I'm not too fond of nearly every every member of the magical community in the United Kingdom. We will see each other again and I will try to keep in contact. Until we meet again

Harry

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Later that night, Dumbledore was sitting in his office sipping a glass of fifty year old single malt and contemplating the way events had resolved themselves.

"I did a great disservice to that poor boy," Dumbledore said sadly. "And I never had a chance to make amends." Any further thought ended at the disturbance of a floo call.

"Albus Dumbledore?" The head in the fireplace was expressionless "Mr. Black wanted me to tell you something."

"What's that?" There was no joy on the Headmaster's face, "is it about Harry."

"One could say that," the face agreed. "He wanted me to tell you this. 'Prophecy is for the weak minded. In the future, don't expect a child to do your dirty work.'"

THE END

AN: Well, this chapter has been written for the last few months and it wasn't easy to keep myself from changing it. I'm not happy about the way things ended but that's normal, I'm never happy with the ending of one of my fics. I guess I can't complain too much, I did finish it after

all. A few notes about the chapter, I used Hermione in the duel with Draco for three reasons. One, Ron would have killed the little bastard. Two, a friend of mine requested a scene where Hermione gets in a duel with Draco and stomps him without much trouble. And three, I like Hermione . . . along with Luna she's one of my two favorite characters. Give me a bit of time to get a sequel out, I have two planned at the moment. The first one has a working title of 'The Hunt for Harry Potter' and it's about Hermione and Luna searching for their friend and the further adventures of Mr. Black. The second is more of an Omake file and it's about Harry's misadventures, current title is 'Back in Black' but that could change.

Omake: A little taste of things to come.

Somewhere in northwestern Canada . . . six months later.

"Beer"

The bartender jumped as the strange man in the corner made himself known. "Sorry I didn't notice you before, I'll get your beer right away."

"No problem," Harry nodded. "I'm good at going unnoticed."

a few minutes later

"No one move," the thug waved his pistol around. "Give me everything in the cash register."

"Alright son," the bartender said trying to keep everyone calm. "No one has to get hurt."

"Don't talk back to me," the thug screamed shattering the bar mirror with a badly placed shot. "I'm the one with the gun, and that means that I'm the one with the power . . ." The man's tirade cut off abruptly as an empty beer bottle hit him in the side of the head.

"All I wanted was some peace and quiet," Harry lamented as he lowered his arm. "But noooo, something always has to happen. Why can't I have just one week without something like this happening? Just one bloody week."

Harry calmly approached the dazed punk who had regained enough of his senses to start yelling threats, "I'm gonna gut you. You're dead, you hear me dead."

"Yes," Harry agreed kicking the man in the head. "I am."

Taking one last look around the bar, Harry sighed. Experience had taught him that when things like this happened it was time to move on.

"Wait," the bartender called. "Who are you stranger?"

Harry paused and muttered something right before he stepped out the bar's bat wing doors and disappeared into the night.

"What did he say?" The bartender asked his paling customers. "For god's sake, tell me what he said."

"Mr. Black," one of the customers managed to calm enough to speak. "He said that his name was Mr. Black."

"My god," the bartender's eyes widened in shock. "My god."

Omake by Chris Hill

The SAS personnel who had been out on that call earlier strode into the bar, where the officer just ordered five rounds per person. "What's up with you?" one of the others asked. "Do you ever think the BBC knows more than it's letting on?" "What's that supposed to mean, mate?" "Well, at the emergency..." I I I I I I I I I "Hello Private, I need to pass." said a woman who's face was unrecognizable and was accompanied by two people. The private help up his hand. "I'm afraid not ma'am. Only those with clearance are allowed in." The woman sighed, and brought out some identification, "My name is the Doctor, and I'm with UNIT." The private snorted, "Like that is likely. You've seen too much of the Tele." "Please ask for your captain, and let me talk to him, or would you like to talk with 10 Downing?" The private shook his head, with nuts like this, it was best to pass it on to the captain. Humouring them would get rid of them faster. "Just a second ma'am." After the Captain arrived, and got the same speel, he asked for a phone and called his commanding officer at headquarters. "Sir, I have some people from UNIT." he smiled into the phone, thinking of

how best to humour these people. "Let them in." The Captain pulled the phone away from his ear for a moment, looked at it, and then put it back. "I beg your pardon sir, but did you say to let them in?" "Yes. The PM called, and UNIT has been cleared. They are apparently following someone called the Doctor. I thought it was a joke myself until I called the PM back to confirm." The Captain hung up and waved the individuals in. He had to see this. I I I I I I I I I I The Doctor sighed as her people looked over the evidence. Dementors were on the loose in the area. Fortunately, she had a useful weapon for this. "Everyone have their Chocolate pens?" Her people nodded and went hunting, along with the Captain who was curious as to the reason for holding ball point pens. Half an hour later he was answered as he, and several other SAS officers who were being affected by something observed the Doctor and her two companions fire chocolate and cover two creatures who literally disintegrated under the assault. "I believe that is it. Just a second and we'll have you fixed up. I I I I I I I I I I "...And just like that, she pressed something in her pocket and a bloody blue police phone box comes squalling out of nowhere. She goes inside with the Captain and her companions, and they come out with several large cases of chocolate which she said that we needed to eat and distribute. The Captain ain't talking, but he's been drowning since then, and won't say what's inside. Me, I'm bloody looking at the series and making weapons that can handle what is shown. If UNIT is real, and the Bloody, Damned, Doctor Who is real, then what else is?" I I I I I I I I I I (Unit stands for Unnatural Notions Investigative Team)

Another good omake by Chris Hill

Fred and George sighed to each other. While it was good to be in on the joke, it was not as good as playing the joke. "Brother, mine..." George began as he was flipping through the instructions on the new equipment that Harry had sent them. "We need to do something..." Fred continued. "He may be a Maurader's son..." "But he isn't a professional prankster." "George, old fiend, does this badge remind you of something?" Fred grinned while reading his manual. George raised an eyebrow and read a passage. "That movie we saw a few weeks ago." "Do you think the Professor will help us with it?" "Probably." I I I I I I I I I I A few days later. There was a knock on Amelia Bones door, and she looked up. There were no appointments

scheduled for this time. Two heads then stuck themselves in. "Hello Mrs. Bones." One began. "We have something for you to try and test." The other continued. "It's been approved by Mr. Black." The first one finished. "Come in." Amelia sighed as she recognized the Weasley twins. Their shop was getting a little TOO famous. George pulled out a set of cards. "We wish to present to you.." "With the compliments of Weasley's Wizarding Wheezes..." "500 Mr. Black Chocolate Frog Cards..." "Useful, as Mr. Black proved..." "Against Dementors." She sighed. "Place them on the desk boys. I'll get around to checking them later." Fifteen minutes after the Weasleys had left, Director Bones found a small business card on her nameplate. It had the letters MOB. Turning it over, she saw a place and time marked. How the hell the card had arrived was a mystery she was going to solve. ILLLLLLLL Bones arrived at the muggle restaurant and was directed at a table in back, where she saw two men in black suits. "You wanted to meet with me?" The two men turned, and she then noted that she couldn't recognize their features or faces. "Yes, Director Bones. This meeting will be short." "First, let us introduce ourselves. I am Agent F, this is Agent G of the M-O-B." "The Mob?" Amelia asked, not liking how this was going. "No." Agent G stated. "The M-O-B. Men of Black. We wanted to give you a file for you to investigate, on behalf of our boss." Agent F then said. "Please pay particular attention to the names, and investigate their circumstances. They are all rather unusual." "You need your memory, so we won't be obliterating you. Just be sure that you do not inform anyone of us." "Why?" "We do not exist. We are figments of the imagination. We protect the people from the scum of the earth, but do so without anyone knowing that we are there. We're the MOB." "I have two men outside the door. They are waiting to arrest you." Amelia stated, now understanding that she was contacted by the mysterious agency that didn't exist. "No worries." G said. "Please put these glasses on, and follow us." F continued. When they got outside, the two Aurors that were with Director Bones took the opportunity to approach the two. "Please place your wands where we can see them." G said, while holding up a pen, "We do not have any wands. In fact, the closest thing is this new Camera that the muggles are playing with. Say Cheese." After the flash, F said, "You were concerned for Director Bones, and decided to follow her. She had an unremarkable lunch. The glasses please Director Bones." G said, "Two to port up." Amelia's mouth was open at how everything happened so quickly. ILLLLLLLL "Well boys?" "Everything worked great,

Professor" Fred said. "Good! The architect is intrigued by your idea, and wants to create a base. The Mechanic wants to see some of your vehicle designs, and Henchgirl and I have a few ideas for improving the gadget designs you came up with. Your MOB organization is well on its way." "Fred old bean." "Yes, George old pal." "Ever get the feeling..." "That you were the butt of your own joke?" Iiiiiiiii Grivner met with Bones in a certain very secure room. They spent the next few nights trying to compile possible sightings of the MOB, which turned out to be a lot more than even they expect. Black, it seemed had agents everywhere! AN02: This is the last author note I promise, just wanted to say that I'm sad to end this and that it was a hell of a ride.